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FROM THE TRINITY TO THE EUCHARIST

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FROM THE TRINITY TO THE EUCHARIST

BY

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TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH
BY
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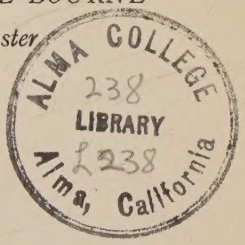
With an Introduction by
HIS EMINENCE CARDINAL BOURNE
Archbishop of Westminster



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Translated from the French work with the kind consent of Mons. Lethielleux, the publisher of the French original work.

In conformity with the Decree of Pope Urban VIII., I make my declaration of submission, in regard both to the matter of this book and its expression, to the judgment of the Apostolic See.

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INTRODUCTION

The learned and eloquent Bishop of Dijon has endeavoured, in the compass of a small volume, to set forth the Divine revelation on two of the greatest mysteries of our Faith. Passing from the consideration of the Most Blessed Trinity to that of the Word made Flesh, and the abiding presence of that Incarnate Word in the Most Holy Sacrament, he strives to make clearer to our weak intelligence by many analogies and illustrations, drawn mainly from ourselves who are fashioned "to the image and likeness of God," the harmony that exists between these profound truths.

Devout souls will find in these reflections fresh light on the mysteries which they have always believed, more fervour in their meditations upon them, and strengthening and quickening in their spiritual lives. The more deeply we penetrate into the understanding of the wonders which God has been pleased to make

known to us regarding His own Divine Being and His dealings with our souls, the greater will be our thanksgiving, and the stronger our desire to participate in those graces of union with Himself which He has placed so abundantly at our disposal.

The English translation of Mgr. Landrieux' treatise will bring his words to the knowledge of thousands who would never read them in the French original.

We beg God to bless the translator and his labour and to make it fruitful in grace to many souls.

FRANCIS CARDINAL BOURNE,
Archbishop of Westminster.

All Souls Day, 1919.

FROM THE TRINITY TO THE EUCHARIST

Like the Sphinx at the entrance to the desert,
Mystery guards the shores of the Infinite.

(HELLO).

THE pride of certain minds rebels against mystery, just as the candour of certain souls is affrighted by scandal. More impressed with the fact than attentive to the causes which explain it, they are troubled and fall away, not seeing that, far from being an anomaly, mystery is in the very nature of things, and that it proceeds from the littleness of man, just as scandal proceeds from his feebleness.

It may truly be said that there are mysteries in religion because God is there, and scandals because man is there. Since Religion brings man into relation with God, it is inevitably steeped in mystery: man is too small to lift himself to God; and since it admits man to collaboration in the work of God, it inevitably opens the door to scandal;[1] man is so feeble that he always cramps divine action, and often perverts it.

(1) "*Necesse est ut veniant scandala*" (*Matt.* xviii, 7.)

So, scandal proves only the weakness of man, while mystery attests the greatness of God. The scandal is not a contradiction, and the mystery is a guarantee : it is the great sign manual of God, His seal, His mark imposed on the letters of credit of the Church ; whereas scandal is only the ugly smudge which man, the clumsy or dishonest servant, has left there.

Yet is it not in violation of good sense to look for the explanation of mystery in the greatness of God ? God and Mystery ! Two words so often coupled, but two words which, in strict logic, do not agree ; they exclude each other.

To regard the matter more particularly, mystery does not proceed from God ; it comes from man. For, on God's side, all is light. God is not, as is said, *unknowable*. God is essentially knowable. The higher truth reaches, the more luminous it is ; and, at its summit, without shadow, without clouds, in the infinite, it attains, in its plenitude, its maximum of brightness. It is man who is too puny. It is he who is not capable. The timid glance, the weak vision of his reason, like the eye of his body, can only support a limited amount of light, of which there is too much for him. Genius itself, with its eagle's glance, cannot endure the

brilliance. It is dazed by it. And this dazed condition is blindness through *excess* of light.

If, then, man and God meet in Religion, it is because God accommodates himself to the feebleness of man ; it is because the Most High bends himself to the puny, as a father inclines himself towards his child in order to lift him to himself. The child abandons himself confidently, without troubling because he does not touch the ground, and has lost his foothold. But, though placed in contact with God by faith, man still remains what he is, as the child remains a child, puny in the arms of the Most High, with his intelligence limited, and consequently always unable to comprehend Him. One could more easily empty the ocean into a vase than the Infinite into a human intelligence. The vase is too narrow, as is the intelligence, but it is *disproportion*, not contradiction.

* * * * * *

Mystery, then, is only a supplement of knowledge.

From the moment that God lifted human nature above itself, to introduce it into the higher world of the supernatural order, reason, adapted to the exigencies and proportions of the natural order, became insufficient. So Faith supple-

mented it. It adjusted itself to reason, as the telescope to the eye, to extend and prolong the vision. It put the intelligence in possession of truths which were beyond its range. We believe, we know; but our assurance does not come from within, by way of comprehension; it comes from without, by way of *information*. Certitude concerning these truths is superadded to us because the tidings come from God; we have not the evidence of them, because God, in His goodness, has willed to tell us more about them than we are able to comprehend, and it is precisely this *addition* which constitutes mystery. Faith is the response of the child which we are to the confidences of the Father, Who is in Heaven. To have faith is to believe without seeing—to believe on another's word: it is at once an act of confidence and an act of homage.

* * * * * *

In a few words St. Paul recalls to good sense those who take offence at mystery. "What!" he cried to the Christians of Corinth, "whilst man is a sphinx to man, you expect God to be transparent to you! You are not capable of deciphering the interior life of a soul, and you would claim to penetrate the interior life of

God, *profunda Dei* ? "—" to drag out the secrets of God," as St. Bernard says.[1]

"*Quis enim hominum scit quae sunt hominis!*" [2]

Yes, between man and man ; between equal and equal ; between two like beings, made on the same plan, whose lives are in juxtaposition, blended together ; between two friends ; between husband and wife, who are one ; between a mother and her child, who is her flesh and her blood, there is mystery.

" My life has its secret, my life has its mystery ! "

Regard me, search me ; my exterior being, my body—you perceive the envelope. Make a tour of it ; listen to my heart beats, watch my steps, my actions, my attitudes ; scrutinize my words ; question me, supplicate, order, threaten me. I am but a child, with a child's feebleness, ignorance and timidity : you represent power and authority. You have prestige, force, cunning, even the intuition of genius. You can overpower me, break my limbs, and crush my body. But you cannot, without my consent, enter my soul. It is impossible to break into a soul. My deepest thought, the root of my being, the enigma of my life, escape you. My

(1) Saint Bernard, *Letters*, 108.
(2) 1, *Cor.*, ii, 10.

mystery is mine, my poor little mystery of a human creature—you can only have it if I *reveal* it to you, and in the measure in which I reveal it. You can only know what I choose to tell you.

And God, then ?

"*Ita quae sunt Dei!*" With God it is the same, but with a formidable *a fortiori*.

* * * * * *

No, a thousand times No. Mystery is not an anomaly. It makes my reason dizzy, but it does not trouble my faith; it reassures it. Since the act of faith commences at the precise point where the intelligence loses its foot-hold in revelation, it is abundantly evident that this line of demarcation is not the same for all, and that it is placed further back for each one according as he extends, by study and by prayer, the field of his supernatural vision.

Mystery, the dazzling abyss, will always blind the eye of man. But there are eyes which better than others support the brilliance of the light, and those, without ever reaching right down to the depth, will yet penetrate further into the mystery. The simple soul of the Breton peasant does not reach so far as the well plenished mind of the theologian. The eager and

limpid glance of pure hearts continues to contemplate where the short sight of the frivolous and the sensual can perceive nothing ; for there is an equation between limpidity of faith and purity of heart : *Beati mundo corde, quoniam Deum videbunt.*[1]

Since then, mystery does not exclude study ; since it calls for it rather, and provokes it, since a clear vision can always grow and raise itself to higher flights with the grace of God, in proportion to the desire and the effort, let us try, not rashly to sound the abyss, but with trepidation to explore its shores.

(1) *Matt.*, v, 8.

I.

Human reason could spell, in the Book of Nature, the first words of the *Credo*: "I believe in God!" It is a matter of faith that, from the spectacle of created things, man is capable of raising himself, by the normal play of his faculties, to the knowledge of God. When reason stands upon the highest summits to which science and philosophy can lift her, she must discover the Divine Being, and catch a glimpse of His perfections. She realizes that He is. She tries to form an idea of Him, at first by denying in respect of Him all that makes her little, all that she sees of the limited, the relative, the defective in herself; then by attributing to Him in an infinite degree that which makes her great, all the qualities whose germs she perceives in her own depths.

And that is all.

Here she would have rested, had not faith, supplying her insufficiency, carried her further and higher.

God has spoken in order to teach us; and the signs in history which witness to His revelation are as clear as those which in nature proclaim His existence.

We believe, on His word, what He has told us of Himself, and know that He is *One in Three Persons*; that is the act of faith! That is the mystery—that is to say, the truth *superadded*, which passes our comprehension, and which we only know by information.

* * * * * *

Is this to say that, once put in the way, in possession of the revealed dogma of the Trinity, we cannot seize, in scraps at any rate, in the created world, some far off reflexions which would have escaped us had we not been taught the truth?

Yes, and No.

No, because there is in the world nothing equivalent to it, nothing to match it. All comparisons are defective; and some (inconsiderately abused) which have become classic through force of repetition, are pure distortions.[1] It is not enough to compare the 3 and the 1 in an

(1) The threefold rhythm has in nature the importance of a fundamental law; everywhere we see unity in trinity; time, space, energy, light, sound, divide themselves into three elements; matter presents itself in three states; created beings are divided into three kingdoms; humanity into three mother races; the Church into three groups, joined by the Communion of Saints; angelic natures into three hierarchies, each comprising three choirs; life rests upon three essential organs; the soul has three faculties; language is built upon three terms, reason upon three propositions, and so on.

object in order to obtain an image of the Trinity. The threefold rhythm which appears so often in nature is an index, a faint reflection, which it is interesting to note, but out of which one cannot make a real comparison.

But, at the same time, because man is

But to cite some comparisons properly so called—the least defective, yet giving but a deformed and incomplete image,—the following may be named :—

(1). The triangle, adopted generally as a symbol of the Trinity. It is enclosed in itself, and so marks the fulness and the absolute distinction of the inner fecundity of God from His exterior operation. Each of the three angles embraces the entire area of the triangle. The three possess it simultaneously and totally, without dividing it into thirds, without multiplying it by three. It remains one, while belonging, entirely and at the same time, to three.

(2). The sun. It *is*, and it manifests itself in light and heat. But its central force, its light and heat, are only three distinct forms of the unique solar force.

(3). Electricity. This subtle energy, intangible, well-nigh immaterial, the mystery of which science has not yet been able to fathom, is at the same time force, light and heat; and, beneath the electric force, the electric light, and the electric heat, is found always one and the same energy.

(4). The mystery of human generation, in its primal type; the man in the prime of his strength, head of the family, image of the Eternal Father; the woman, born from him, like him, his double, image of the Word; the child, fruit and sign of their love, who proceeds from them both, and unites them to one another, image of the Holy Spirit.

But the similitude stops there, for the unity is not perfect; it is not substantial. The three do not make one being, one man. They have a like nature, but it is not identically the same, and they do not possess it simultaneously in its entirety.

"*created in the image of God;*"[1] and there are within our reach, in the human soul, some elements of comparison, it is there, and there only, that we must seek them; for, by the simple fact that the soul has received the original imprint,[2] vague and rudimentary if you will, but sufficiently distinct and sufficiently marked to justify the words of Scripture, "created in the image of God," it is impossible, if one examines it closely, not to decipher some traits of resemblance to God.

* * * * * *

God is pure spirit; our soul too is spirit, the lowest of spirits, it is true, bound still to matter and dependent on the senses, and on the lowest rung of the spiritual ladder; yet notwithstanding the enormous distance which separates the Infinite Perfection from our poor state, the Creator being from the created being, a being owing everything, such as we are, from the Absolute Being, that which passes in the

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(1) *Dixit Deus:* "*Faciamus hominem ad imaginem et similitudinem nostram*"
(*Gen.*, i. 26) "*Ad imaginem quippe Dei factus est homo.*"
(*Gen.*, xx. 6) "*Ad imaginem similtudinis suae fecit illum.*"
(*Wisdom*, ii., 23)—"*Secundam imaginem suam fecit illum.*"
(*Eccle.*, xvii, 1)—"*Vir imago Dei est*" (1. *Cor.*, xi, 7)

(2) *Signatum est super nos lumen vultus tui.* (*Ps.*, iv. 7)

soul of man gives us some shadowy presentation of that which passes in God.

To live is to act, to act is to produce; all life is fruitful.

The proper action of the mind is to conceive thought—its own thought. When it has thus conceived *its thought*, in the noblest and fullest sense of the word, and on the highest plane, the thought, which exhausts its productive power, which responds most adequately to itself, which reflects it and expresses it, it is not substantially divided. It remains whole, but within it a new term, immanent and distinct, is produced. There is, in the mind which thinks, something which is not in the mind which does not think, something which comes from it, which is not it, which remains in it, and which is of the same nature as it—that is to say, of a spiritual nature like it: there is a mind which has conceived, a mind which is father of a thought; and there is the conception of the mind,—the thought, the child of the mind, the interior Word, the mental Word, which, we can say, has been generated from it; for generation is only "the reproduction of oneself in a being of the same nature."

* * * * * *

But at once, and again without any division, a third term necessarily arises.

The mind which knows its thought, or, rather, which knows itself, and contemplates itself in it, feels itself drawn towards it by a movement of pleasure and affection which goes out from the generating mind to the Word which it has generated.

And if this human Word, instead of being fugitive, fragile, unsubstantial as a shadow, could have been brought to a degree of perfection sufficient to enable it to subsist by itself, to have knowledge of itself, to be not simply something, but *some one*, and acquire personality, it would turn spontaneously, with pleasure and affection, towards its father, the mind which generated it. And this double movement of love, which would be their reciprocal love, and would join them the one to the other, while remaining distinct from both, would complete this miniature of the human trinity.

What is there between two who love? Love. But which? The love of this one, or the love of that one? Neither, but a special love, *their love*—the mysterious result of the double current, affectionate, ecstatic, which vibrates between the two hearts of friends, which belongs to both, which *proceeds from both*, which comes and

goes from one to the other, and binds them together.

In our human affections this bond has no real subsistence, any more than has our thought. It only subsists in the heart, and by the heart. It is only a disposition, a state of the heart. It is not strong enough, potent enough, perfect enough, to subsist by itself. It is frail, fluid, precarious. It is subject to the weakness of the human heart. It has no to-morrow; for we see everywhere around us broken affections or affections which are wavering. Our love is always unstable, as are our intellectual conceptions.

If we were capable of making our Word and our Love subsist, of elevating them to the full development of intelligent substance, where being attains perfection in personality, we should have—proper proportions being of course kept in mind—no longer a pale image, but, in some sort, a reproduction in little of the Trinity—three who are in essence one, yet without confusion; and one who radiates forth in three, yet without division.

My soul, in effect, is always one, identical with itself. It knows itself, and it loves itself. It can neither be nor live without knowing itself, nor know itself without loving itself. It

loves itself in the knowledge which it has of itself, which is its Word; and, again, it is by this Word, by this knowledge, that the love with which it loves itself returns to it.

I have knowledge of myself, but it is the *I* which has knowledge of this *Me*, the *I* which *projects* itself and knows itself in the *Me*. But while the *I* is the principle which knows, the *Me* is the term which is known; and thus a distinction is set up between the *I* and the *Me*, who, nevertheless, in the root of their being, remain identical the one with the other. And this knowledge which I has of Me involves and implies a third term, which is the love of *I* for *himself*. Hence we have three elements—imperfect, doubtless, but irreducible—coexisting, yet without confusion, in the indivisible unity of my soul.

In God there is the same law of activity and fecundity, but in the supreme degree of power and perfection.

In God everything finds its end, everything is completed.

Though we are always potentially capable of thinking and willing, we cannot in fact always maintain our faculties in exercise; we are not ceaselessly thinking and willing. There are rests, diversions, impotencies, and fatigues: we

hesitate, we waver. A fly will prevent a man from thinking. We distinguish in ourselves—and it is our weakness—the aptitude to act and action. In God this distinction does not exist. Act is *permanent*, without defect or loss, without respite or lassitude, with a fecundity constant, absolute. It is *immanent* because the Divine Mind does not, as does ours, receive from outside the elements of its knowledge, and because It finds in Itself the object of Its love. It is one—unique by reason of its plenitude, and its infinite perfection : there could not be two, because the one act absorbs in itself all the divine activity.

We are not speaking here of the Creation. The creation does not satisfy the infinite power of God. It is inferior, it is below Him, of another order, in no sense proportioned to Himself.

Every living thing produces, in its fecundity, an equal, *something resembling itself*, of the same nature as itself. Everything living reproduces itself.

The Divine Mind generates from all eternity His Word, His Me, the perfect expression of a perfect knowledge. His substantial reproduction, His radiant and living Image, another Self ; *Imago Dei*[1]—*Splendor gloriae et figura substantiae ejus.*[2]

(1) *Col.*, i, 15. (2) *Heb.*, i, 3.

* * * * * *

We try in vain to put into our conceptions, our feeble thoughts, our human Word, all that there is in us, all that we are, all that we are worth, the best of ourselves, our entire being,—like Michael Angelo, sculpturing his *Moses*, who did not, for he could not, make it live ; but the Divine Mind succeeds. We put " all our soul " into something, but it is only a manner of speaking : God the Father does it actually and completely.

And the Divine Word constitutes, in the bosom of the Divine Nature, without dividing it, this second term, having the fullness of being, and sovereign perfection—not only, like the human Word, a mode of the Mind, but an entity, a reality, subsisting and living, autonomous, having knowledge of Himself, One who says *I*, Who is Himself, Who is *Someone*, a Person, and Who not only gives full contentment to the Father, but can reciprocally turn towards Him, by a deliberate movement, in an answering transport of infinite love.

Thereupon, from this mutual rapture, from this mutual kiss of the Father and the Son, issues the third term—Love, united, conscious, consubstantial and subsisting, passing from One to the Other, *proceeding* from Both as from a

single principle,[1] His perfection equal to theirs ; One Who is Himself, and Who, a living Bond, an eternal Link, welds together in the indivisable unity of the Divine Nature, the Trinity of Persons.

We call Him the Holy Spirit. Spirit, but not in the ordinary acceptance of the word, as one says that God is a pure Spirit, that an angel is a spirit, that the soul is a spirit. So interpreted the name would not be the specific name of the Third Person, since the Father also is spirit, and the Son is spirit, whereas He is *the* Spirit.

It is in this manner.

Love, at its highest point, no longer speaks, no longer sings ; it is silent. It vents itself in a

(1) To *proceed* means to come forth ; there is *procession* when one thing emanates from another ; *processio est emanatio unius ab altero* ; it is an indication of origin ; the river proceeds from its source ; it flows from it ; heat proceeds from fire ; perfume from the flower. But to *proceed* is more exact than to come forth, for to come forth implies the idea of becoming ; that which comes forth becomes ; and that which becomes was not before, or was something else. Now in God nothing becomes, nothing occurs, nothing happens, either by creation or by addition, or by mutation. *He* is—without more or less, and one cannot say of Him " at first " and " afterwards," for no second state succeeds to a first state. The word *proceed* is more precise, because it is wider ; it expresses simply the idea of origin, without confusion with any other concept. It is the expression which the Gospel has gathered from the lips of Our Lord Himself (*John*, viii, 42, and xv, 26) and which the Church has officially adopted.

sigh, in a breath in which the very soul passes. It is in this sense that one gives to the Third Person in the Trinity the name of Spirit. *Spiritus*—a breath, a sigh, full and deep, of the panting soul which breathes out its love; a burning breath, which seems to come from the heart rather than from the lungs; which gushes from the very sources of our being, and issues from them only to return; it is recovered, caught—as one says one catches his breath; it is breathed in anew with as much pleasure as it was exhaled; in this ceaseless play, to a mysterious rhythm, of the respiration which is the sign and the condition of the life within—*spiraculum vitae*—it is a veritable thermometer of love, reflecting vividly in its acceleration or diminution every emotion of the heart.

Since then, one calls breath—*spiritus*—[1] that vital movement of the lungs so harmoniously regulated by the beating of the heart, is it not right, as St. Thomas asks, also to call the Third of the Three Divine Persons "*Spiritus*—a breath, a sigh, a panting of love."[2]

(1) Jesus breathed on his apostles when He would communicate to them the Holy Spirit: *Insufflavit et dixit eis: Accipite Spiritum Sanctum* (*John*, xx, 22). Again, it was under the form of a mighty wind or breath that the Holy Spirit descended into the Cenacle, on the morning of Pentecost, "*tanquam advenientis spiritus vehementis*" (*Acts*, ii, 2).

(2) *Opus Theol.*, 2, c. 14.

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There are then, three modes of being in which the One Divine Essence is manifested—the Father, the Son, the Holy Spirit.

This is the mystery of the inner life of God, the mystery of His infinite activity, which makes fruitful the Divine Essence, whereby there subsist in It, without breaking Its unity, three distinct Persons. He is One without being alone ; His is One life lived by Three.

But He is not a being single and triple under the same aspect : that would be absurd. That which is one is other than that which is threefold. Neither the Unity nor the Trinity is the complete nature of God ; in one point of view He is one, and in another point of view He is three. There are not Three Divine Beings, three gods—there is One God only, but One God in Three Persons—a God Who has three modes of " subsistence," Who unfolds Himself, Who expands Himself in Three " Subsistencies ; " Who has knowledge of Himself, in three distinct aspects. Unity multiplied three times by itself does not make three, but always one. ($1 \times 1 \times 1 = 1$)

The Three Divine Persons do not therefore represent each a part of God, each a third ; for Their cohesion—words here fail and do in-

justice to the thought—Their cohesion, if one may so call it, is so great, in virtue of the bond which links Them, that it does not stop short even of unity of nature.

The Three are the same in nature, and distinct solely in the "relations" of origin which constitute Them. The Relations are inseparable from the Life. The Life supposes them, requires them, produces them. The Relations are the pivot of all activity, of all fecundity.

The Divine Substance cannot act, any more than can my mind, without relations arising, and it is the subjects of those relations Whom we call the Divine Persons. Alone the First, the Eternal cause of the generation of the Word, is characterized by the Paternity which belongs only to Him; alone the Second, eternally begotten of the Father, is characterized by Sonship; alone the Third, proceeding from the Father and the Son, is characterized by "Spiration."

This apart, They are equal and alike; all is common between Them.

And so, These Three Who are God, identical in the fount of their being, since They possess fully and simultaneously, without dividing it, he entire Divine Nature, are not confused with

one Another, for They have Each Their specific character, substantial and permanent. Hence it is that the unity in God does not imply any idea of solitude or isolation. They are Three—Father, Son and Holy Spirit—Who make but One (triunitas), united in ecstatic love—an ineffable harmony, which cannot grow weary, which cannot be exhausted.

* * * * * *

Thus we have a Trinity of correspondences, of mutual relations, of modes of existence, apart from which one cannot conceive the life and fecundity of the Divine Essence ; a necessary Trinity of Persons which is none other than the complete expression, the perfect integration of the totality of the Divine Being in the unique Divine Substance ; a Trinity which is the outcome of Unity, and its consecration. For the Persons do not exist, and cannot exist, in a separate state, since the relation which distinguishes Them is at the same time the bond which unites Them. The Father is only so in so far as He generates the Son, and with Him produces the Holy Spirit. He would not be the absolute originating Principle, if He had not, in the Son, His absolute Term, and if He did not again find in the Spirit the reciprocal and absolute unity of Principle and Term.

He is, He acts, He enjoys—that is to say, He asserts Himself through the *possession* of being in Himself, through the *manifestation* of being for Himself, and through the *fruition* of being, in the return to Himself. But He acts always through the Son, and has delight always with the Son, in the Spirit. That which he gives to the Son to make Him like to Himself, His whole Being, He receives in return from the Son through the Spirit; so that each of the Three possesses the Divine Substance totally—in reality, in action, in enjoyment; Each of the Three, then, is true God. But as this plenitude of the Divine Substance is only possessed by each conjointly, with the Two Others *indivisibly* and in virtue of the bond which unites Him to Them, it follows that there are not Three Gods, since there is but one Divine Substance. They could not be additional to one another, unless they were separate from one another. But isolated, no one of Them could any longer be Himself or at all. So in God unity is necessarily and naturally conditioned by trinity, and reciprocally trinity by unity.

The evangelical formula which comes directly from Christ Jesus: "*In the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit*" violates

the rules of grammar to bow itself to the exigencies of dogma. It repeats the conjunction between each of the Persons, to make it clear that They are Three—"*Patris et Filii et Spiritus Sancti.*" It writes *in nomine* in the singular, in order to affirm that this plurality does not impair the unity of the Divine Essence.

* * * * * *

This psychological analysis of our mental operations, trenching upon the domain of theology, is not useless, but we must be careful not to push it too far, and we should, in order to keep it within the strict and delicate precision of dogma, append to every word a qualification.

Besides, our mental habits embarrass us when we think of God. We are slaves of the notions with which we are familiar. We conceive of God as we conceive of everything else, in a human way. It is hard for us to see in God aught else than a man more perfect than men, a superman of superior essence, Who would think, will, love better, assuredly, than we should, but nevertheless, according to our fashion of thinking, willing and loving. And then we transfer to God the idea that we have of a human person. We persist in comparing the Divine Personalities with human personalities ; and confusion is the result.

To begin with, we speak of "Persons," but it is not the right word. We have no proper terms for speaking of God. We have adopted a word at haphazard for fault of a better, and it is a source of embarrassment. For instance, in man the unity of persons corresponds to the unity of nature; three human persons make three men. But on reflexion, we can soon clearly see that the person of an individual is not identical with his nature. The same person, the same *Me*, always possesses his nature; but his nature—his physical being, at any rate—is modified without change in him. We unwittingly affirm this truth when we say "*I no longer feel the same as I used*,"—not the same, as regards one's nature, perhaps; but as regards one's personality, that is always the same.

A person possesses his nature; he is its owner, he is its master. In the case of man he keeps it jealously to himself, whereas God communicates it without reserve. This difference should be noted, for it is essential.

In our own case there is in fact hardly any distinction between person and nature, just because the human *Me* is essentially self-preservative and egotistic. The person returns on himself, he wraps himself within himself in order to separate himself from others, regarding

his individuality as so much the more perfectly his own the more shut in and the more solitary it is. He so identifies his *Me* with his nature that one stands indifferently for the other.

In God it is otherwise. Instead of being a selfish concentration on the *Me* His personality is an expansion of it. It does not shut itself up in its individuality, it goes out from itself. Diffusive of itself, it brings itself necessarily into touch with another, it is a subsistent *relation*; it springs with all its energy towards another than itself, in order to unite itself to it, and it is only by the manner in which it is attained that it is distinguished from it.

The characteristic of the human person is that he is not, and cannot be, in another person. The characteristic of the Divine Person, on the contrary, is that He is necessarily in another.[1]

(1) We cannot find in created nature a satisfactory comparison, whereby to express this mutual compenetration of the Divine Persons, which makes Them, unlike the human person, subsist in one another, and which the theologians call *Circumincession*. Light, perhaps, furnishes the elements of such a comparison, for St. John reveals to us that the Word was Light,—*erat lux vera* (*John* i, 9)—emitted light, adds the Nicene creed—*lumen de lumine*, Light of Light.

Let us place, then, in a room, and in the form of a triangle, three lamps, A,B and C, furnished with reflectors. Lamp A alone is alight. Let us suppose that it is able to illuminate B by its beams.

Lamp B, shining with a light, like its own, owes to A the bright-

The proof is self evident.

While the human personality does not in the least imply paternity as of being father, or being son, (which is something accidental, something added to the human person), in God paternity is *constitutive* of the First Person, as filiation is of the Second Person. Now, neither paternity nor filiation throws back the being upon itself; they lead it essentially towards another. Paternity desires the son; the father goes out towards the son with all the force of his paternity, he is father in the measure that he lives for his son, that he absorbs himself in him, so as to act only with him, in the measure that he spends himself for him, as if he wished to preserve and develope, at his own expense, the gift of life which he has given to him.

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ness which yet is its own brightness, and gives it all back to A like an act of homage, by its reflector.

Now let these convergent flames of A and B, their directed beams striking upon C, light it up; lamp C will shine out like A and B with a light proceeding from A and B, but which is its own, and it returns it to them equally, by reflection.

These three lights, then, united and conjoined, will form only one, in the sense that it will be impossible to distinguish them among themselves; each is entirely in the other two. Nevertheless, however intimate the fusion, there is no confusion; each has its distinct focus; for if any one of the three is carried out of the room, it draws away its own light with it, without removing any of the light from the other two.

The triangle would give a vague idea of the *Circumincession*, for the three angles are in one another, and possess at the same time the entire area of the triangle.

In the Trinity the Father goes out to the Son with all that He has—that is to say, with all that He is, to make the Son like Him and consubstantial with Himself. The First Person is so identified with paternity, that, so to speak, it seems that it is in the Son that He has knowledge of Himself, because the Son is the object and the reason for the existence of the paternity. He does not say, putting himself in the first place : *" I have begotten Thee, Thou are my Son "* but : *" Thou art my Son, it is I Who have begotten Thee."*[1]

The same sense and the same idea are expressed in that other saying of the Father, at the Jordan and at Tabor : *"This* is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased "[2]—*complacere*, a particular love which implies a return upon itself. The Father cannot love the Son without being well pleased in that love, without Himself loving Himself, since He finds Himself again in the Word.

Have we not a presentiment of this ecstatic life—outside itself to the profit of another, in opposition to the egoism which exists in itself and for itself—of this life of the one in the other—in maternal love ? The mother is the

(1) *Filius meus est tu, ego hodie genui te* (*Heb.*, i, 5)
(2) *Luke*, iii, 22. *Matt.*, xvii, 5.

more mother, more perfect mother, in proportion as she lives less for herself, and is all for her child.

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Surely there is no need to labour the point farther, in order to be satisfied that our poor understanding, embarrassed rather than aided by its natural knowledge, must distrust itself when it reasons about the Trinity.

That it should strive by inference to discover, in revelation, those luminous probabilities which will sustain the faith in face of obscurities where reason is confounded, is well. That it should essay sagacious inferences, that it should make appeal to philosophy and science, that it should seek in itself and around itself elements of investigation which will enable it to scrutinize and interpret dogmatic formulæ, is excellent. That it should arrive even at the somewhat venturesome conclusion that, the existence of God once admitted, it may perhaps succeed in having a forecast of the Trinity, in so far as the latter proceeds logically and necessarily from the former, is again well. But we cannot undertake either to explain or to demonstrate the mystery ; the Infinite cannot be drawn to a finite scale, and God is above the reach of our understanding.

II

We have seen in the enigma of our mind, as one discerns a vague form in the shadow, the reduced image of the Trinity—a certain similitude, a likeness by analogy, which throws a feeble light upon the shores of the dogma, while leaving the mystery itself in darkness.

Can we go a step farther, and catch a glimpse beyond the sphere of the created intelligence, "signed with the light of God's countenance,"[1] of some trait of the divine physiognomy?

It is likely; for, on the principle that every being acts in conformity with its nature, we may infer that, in the same measure that the human soul has revealed for us, by its manner of being, something of the inner life of God, it will show us, by the manner of its external action, something of the external action of God.

* * * * * *

I have my deep, inner life, my very own life, my hidden life. I flee from noise, from the crowd; or, rather, what matters to me the noise, what matter the crowd? I shut my eyes. I isolate myself. Far from all that surrounds me I see nothing, I hear nothing, but the echo of

(1) *Ps.*, iv, 7.

my soul within myself. Thus absorbed in my solitary reflexions, I follow the secret working of my thoughts. It is then that there comes a distinct impression of a strange multiplication of being, as if there were within me a number of beings, identical and distinct at the same time. I am present, as though it were the work of another, at the silent play of my interior powers. I feel myself live. I hear myself live. I talk of myself with myself. I perceive that I am *I* at the root of my thought, and at the opposite end that I am *Me*. I am absorbed in this encounter of *I* and *Me*; it captivates me, and I seem to have a sensible vision of the fact, that my *I*, opposite my *Me*, finds itself again, and takes delight in *Itself*: that is to say, that my soul becomes conscious of itself in loving itself in its word.

But of these internal, immanent operations of intense and fruitful life nothing has got abroad. Around me nothing has been seen, nothing suspected.

But now I experience the need of escaping from this self-concentration, of coming outside myself, of showing myself to others.

There seems to be nothing simpler. I am about to speak and in my speech I shall utter my whole self.

It will be seen however, on analysis, that there is nothing more astonishing.

In the first place, I feel that my mind lives so completely within me, is so completely me, that if I essay to put it outside myself, my entire self will go with it.

I realize, on the other hand, that my thought, my interior word, the child of my mind, is so mobile, so apt to take flight, that it only waits *to be sent* in order to go.

But how go? There is a double barrier to penetrate—my own senses and those of him to whom I wish to speak. My thought can only go forth from my mind by passing through my senses; it can only enter into another through his senses.

Now, my thought is purely spiritual. It offers nothing tangible to the senses; for the senses only perceive and retain sensation—that is to say, something material.

If, then, I wanted it to pass from me, and enter by the door of the senses—go out through my mouth, and enter through his ears—I must *materialize* it. So I envelope it in a material element. I enclose it in a sound. I embody it in a little noise, in a vibration, in a syllable.

Articulated mechanically by a fool, a madman or an animal—we say of some animals that

they speak—this word-sound is hollow, an empty husk ; there is nothing inside it. But if I put into it myself, my idea, it then becomes living speech, the sign and vehicle of my thought. If my word is incarnated in it, then this sound becomes a body for it, carries it, gives it expression, and with my word, which it makes transparent, it reveals and delivers my soul. Therein is the secret of its power.

What is of less account than a word sound ? A trumpery thing, some particles of air fashioned by human lips, paltry syllables, blown about by the breeze ! Yet this frail sheath is filled with the Word, and the Word shatters it and bursts forth, and earth shakes, and Heaven listens ; for in speech it is the soul which asserts itself, and breaks forth. Eloquence is simply the flowering of a great soul in splendid words.

Nevertheless, after the torment of conception of the mental Word, there still remains the torture of being unable to give adequate expression to the idea. Whence comes the orator's sinking of heart, if not from the utter sense of failure, as he experiences the distance which separates the thought which shines within him from the speech which issues from his lips ? (Certain manuscripts of Bossuet are

covered with corrections and erasures). Words are indeed made to express thought, but though the orator's thought belongs to him, his words are common property; he must take them as they are, for what they are worth, and, thus reduced to clothing his thoughts in ready-made garments, he runs the risk of marring it by a vesture either too close fitting or too loose.

The human Word cannot, then, utter itself in speech without a loss of dignity.

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Now let us cast our eyes higher.

In principio erat Verbum—in the beginning was the Word. *Et Verbum erat apud Deum*—and the Word was with God—as my thought, preceding speech, was living in my understanding. *Et Deus erat Verbum*—and the Word was God—as my thought was me. *Et Verbum caro factum est, et habitavit in nobis*—and the Word descended, humbling Himself, into flesh, in order that God might unite Himself with us—as my thoughts flow into words, in order that my soul may communicate itself to others.

The Incarnation is the sequel to the Trinity. Without any possible constraint thereto, save the need which love has of continually giving itself more and ever more—God created the

world. He had multiplied in Heaven the angelic natures, with greater profusion than the stars in the firmament, and spread life over the earth, with such prodigality that it abounds everywhere. Then, in order to bring into unity this multiplicity of beings, He had welded into one the two extreme elements in the universe, dust and angel, matter and spirit; He had made man, body and soul, an epitome of creation. And man had been filled with the added gifts of grace, so that there was already within him something of the Divine drawing him further and further into intimacy with God, and introducing all creation along with him. And in the case of the saints in ecstasy there were instances of their human nature being so invested by the Godhead that their faculties were suspended, as if God had, for a moment, absorbed them into Himself.

But we have not as yet the ineffable union of two who make but one—the hypostatic union which joins, in the unity of person, the unity of the *Me,* the divine nature and the human nature, without confounding them, in the same Christ Jesus.

Love can never do enough. It knows neither reserve nor measure; it strains its powers to their utmost limit.

The book of the *Imitation* magnifies love; the poets exalt it. Our heart, which by nature is narrow, and is contracted still further by egoism, still has its sublime flights, immense desires, wild dreams, when it loves; but it is soon fatigued, and soon becomes powerless to continue its flight.

But God is all love—*Deus charitas est*! Love infinite, all powerful, He only lives and acts by the perpetual gift of Himself; that is the supreme reason of all the marvels of the supernatural order.

He has committed this folly—the word is St. Paul's—of pushing His union with man, to the extremity of positive and concrete incarnation; *God so loved the world that He gave His only Son*[1] to perfect and consummate in Jesus Christ, true God and true man, the absolute unity of all things.

Because man had fallen the Incarnation was *redemptive*, through the humiliation of the Crib and of Calvary. But it is not forbidden to believe that, independently of sin, the Incarnation was in the designs of God, that it would have taken place all the same; that sin only determined the mode.

But let us leave on one side theories which

(1) *John*, iii, 16.

are purely theological, and hasten on to the parallel, luminous as it is, of the human incarnation with the Divine Incarnation; for the Spirit was incarnate in the flesh of Adam before the Word was made Man in Jesus Christ; and nothing explains better the great mystery of the faith than the mystery of our nature, which is a rough sketch of it,[2] as though the

(2) From the union of soul and body results a single human person. I feel my body and my soul absolutely distinct the one from the other, yet intimately blended in a perfect unity of my being, of my *Me*.

So in Jesus Christ, the union of the Divine Nature and of the human nature is not a simple juxtaposition of the one and the other, nor an absorption of the one by the other; it is a conjunction under the dominion of the unique personality of the Word, which possesses both, without medley or confusion. They remain what they are, just as the body and the soul joined together in the human person. The divinity is not degraded, the humanity is not changed. So Christ is truly man, since He has a complete human nature, and truly God, since He has the complete Divine Nature. As the body is complete in the human composition, the human nature is found in Christ in all its constitutive elements; but it does not belong only to itself. Instead of subsisting by itself, and ending in its own normal personality—the human personality—it subsists in the Word, and by the Word. It has not its own autonomy. It is dependent on the Word. It is ruled by the Word. It cannot say either *I* or *Me*. The Word has taken it, to annex it to His Divine Nature. He has espoused it, He has made its humanity His own, consequently the humanity of a God.

The body in the human composition does not belong to itself either. It would have had its independence in the animal order. But, though it has not its independence, this privation is not a detriment, for it is compensated by the superior personality which the soul communicates to it. It is a taking possession by the soul, by the human person, of the being of the body and of its operations

first Adam—whose nature we share—had been conceived in advance on the plan and according to the type of the second Adam ; "*Adam qui est forma futuri.*" (*Rom.*, xv, 14) In this way truly we have been made in the resemblance of God, since, first, we bear within ourselves a confused copy of the Trinity, and, secondly, also a facsimile of the Incarnation.

Let us follow out this idea to its conclusion.

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so that, as belonging to the soul, the material acts of the body, which in their nature are, and remain, the acts of an animal, contract, in virtue of the union, a kind of spirituality—they are acts of which the human person claims the responsibility and the profit, and which it owns ; they are human acts.

In spite of this taking over of possession, the human nature in Christ, like the body in the human composition, preserves its own activity. It operates according to its manner of being, but on behalf of the Word. And, from the fact of this appropriation, the works of the human nature are rightly accounted divine works, as in reality they are. Hence the infinite value and the redeeming efficacy of the sufferings of Christ.

Possessing two natures, Christ has two wills, the one divine, the other human. But just as the distinction between the one and the other is clear, so is their harmony perfect, for the human is always subordinated to the Divine will.

Each operates in its own sphere, in concord with the other, as the body and the spirit in the human composition, and the act is always referred to the person ; it always contracts the dignity of the person ; all my acts are human, whether they proceed from the body or the soul ; all the acts of Christ are divine, whether they proceed from the Divine or the human nature.

We are astonished to see Jesus act as a man, we should have liked to see Him act always as God. But the Word has taken human nature, for the very purpose of making use of it. He became man in order that He might act in a human manner. He had no need of the Incarnation in order to act in a divine manner.

How could the Word become Incarnate, and dwell among us, in Judea, without disturbing the balance of the blessed Trinity, without breaking Its harmony, without introducing into It a discordant element ?

When I utter my thought, does that imply the smallest disturbance of my intellectual life ? Does the fact of incarnating my thought, my Word, in voice, espousing it to speech, rivetting it to words, modify in any respect whatever my state of soul ?

How it is possible, I do not know. But I dispatch it from me in order to send it to others, and nevertheless I do not deprive myself of it. Those to whom I have given it have taken it, they possess it in its integrity—yet I possess it still. It was mine before I spoke, it has become yours ; but it is still mine after I have spoken. My thought has gone forth from my mind, and yet in my mind I always find it again. And it has not been broken in two by any process of division, for my spoken word is identical with the word which I have thought. This is the prodigy which is wrought in our human nature.

So, too, the Incarnation of the Word makes no break in the inner life of God. When the divine activity gave itself vent in an outpouring

of love the Second Person of the Trinity was able to espouse human nature in order to come among us without troubling the harmonies of heaven. The Incarnation is an external fact in time, and does not interfere with the eternal relations of the Father and the Son, and the Son and the Holy Spirit, nor complicate nor contradict them—any more than the incorporation of my thought in words is a hindrance to the inner working of my understanding.

III

The Eucharist is the sequel to the Incarnation.

The sound of the voice is not merely a sound; it is a sound captured by the soul, and a sound which she makes her own, which she assimilates, which she adjusts to her thought like a garment, which she impregnates with her spirit, which she animates with her breath ; for one feels the soul vibrate in the sound, and recognizes her in it. Human speech is a living thing. It has its physiognomy, its gait, its accent. It comes to the birth, it goes its way, and dies when its course is ended. We can mark its duration and measure its extent. And every one who meanwhile came within its compass, all who heard it, received the thought, and thereby communicated with the mind.

But what about the rest of the world—those who were beyond the reach of my voice, and could not hear me ?

Suppose I wish to reach those who are at a distance, or future generations ? Suppose I wish to extend the range of my speech, so that others, for all time, may nourish themselves on my thought, and live in it ? Suppose that I

have the ambition to assure survival, prolonged action, for my word? What do I do? I write my word.

I take material even colder than the sound of my voice, inert matter, inelastic, like all dead things, and a little ink—and I fix my thought upon the paper. There it will remain, dormant, concealed under a conventional formula, in itself nothing but a veil, a covering, a sort of sacrament, a *sensible sign*, which hides it, and consequently *contains* it.

Beneath the written syllables the human Word sleeps, and, like the spark in the veins of the stone, only waits for the shock of the summons to awaken. But we must know how to break the flint, how to open the syllables, in order to liberate the flame.

A couple of lines of writing come under your eyes. The ink has paled. The characters are scarce readable on this yellow sheet, torn from an old book. You read with an inattentive eye, but, suddenly, there is a flash, a light illuminates your mind, the blood flows warmer to your heart. For centuries, may be, he who imprisoned his thought there has been no more, but his Word, asleep in those syllables, has touched your soul, and your soul shakes with emotion.

Christ Jesus did but pass through the world. He lived for some thirty years in a little country scarce half the size of Switzerland, on the other side of the Mediterranean.

All who lived in Judea at that time were able to see Him, and hear Him, in the streets and lanes, in their daily going to and fro. When they accosted Him they entered into relation with the Word of God ; when they sat at His feet to listen to Him, to question, to implore Him, they conversed with God. His intimates, who followed Him more closely, who lived with Him, were in perpetual communion with God.

Those encountered the Word of God in His earthly life. They placed their feet in His steps, they saw Him with their eyes, they heard Him with their ears, they touched Him with their hands.

How many of these privileged ones were there ? Some thousands.

But Christ's mission had proportions far vaster than Palestine. All those who had need of Him were not His contemporaries, nor His fellow citizens. The Redemption was not restricted to one generation of Jews. And Jesus Himself declared that His love flowed out over all races, embraced all the ages. He has in terms

told us that He came for all, and that He would never leave us, but He would remain with us.

And under the Eucharistic bread, sign and veil at the same time of the Real Presence, limiting It and concealing It, under the conventional cover of the Sacrament, the Word of God rests, lifeless, hidden—as, if one may so put it, the Word of man lies beneath the ink of the syllables. He waits ; He waits the shock, the concussion, the provocation of the pure soul, to release, in communion, all His energies.

Only, one must be initiated. The words which burst forth under the weight of the idea, as the buds blossom out in April from the push of the sap—the most pregnant words—say nothing, show nothing, to him who knows not how to read them. If I do not know the language, I shall pass indifferent by the treasure ; I shall perish, with the prescription which would have saved my life in my hands.

Why are there so many careless round the Tabernacle—so many ignorant who pass stupid before the Sacrament, who suspect nothing there—except that they are uninitiated ? They stay at the outside of things, without penetrating their mystery. They do not know how to read. Reading breaks open the secret of the writing. It extracts the Human Word from

the sheath of the syllables; and communion extracts the Divine Word from the Sacrament. He who reads drinks the thoughts of a man condensed in syllables; he who communicates nourishes himself with the substance of Christ condensed under the sacramental species.

In the Incarnation the Word, like human speech, was a prisoner in time and space; the Eucharist is exempt from those limitations. In the case of the Host, as in the case of the book, repetition multiplies the Word, without dividing it, without lessening It. The Sacrament is renewed as often as the sign is reproduced.

Of old, when the patient pen of a monk had slowly transcribed a document, one possessed two copies of the work, and the thought of the master lived again, like itself in the copy, as it was in the original.

To-day, we have the printing press, and rotary machines; the ink flows in streams. One counts by hundreds and thousands. Big editions pass the million. The number doesn't matter; it is all alike. Take from a pile, by chance, a volume, a number: you have the authors' thought complete. It is not partition or dividing into proportional fractions, but reproduction. Not two copies, or ten, or the whole edition can tell you more than the single

copy. They are not added to one another. Each contains as much as all the others together.

May we say that these multiplied copies are like brothers, since they resemble each other so much? No; this is not enough: they are the same, identical with one another.

Listen now to St. Thomas, speaking of Communion: "*sumit unus, sument mille*"—for one or for a thousand, the share is equal; "*quantum iste, tantum ille*": Christ entire, because He is entire in each of the consecrated Hosts, and because multiplicity of the sign does not multiply the Sacrament.

Already the mystery of speech, which sends forth the human Word, while leaving it intact in the understanding, has prepared us for the mystery of the Incarnation, which put earth in possession of the Word of God, though He had not left Heaven. The mystery of writing familiarizes us with the dogma of the simultaneous presence of Christ in every spot in the world to which the Church has carried the Eucharist.

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These comparisons, it is true, are only indications, simple analogies, which one might push too far; and by further pursuit into detail

and analysis, we might get too deeply into pure metaphysics.

Still, if they illuminate only the surface of things, they are not useless, for, once convinced that she carries within herself a counterpart of divine mysteries, the reason bows in a more filial way before the Faith.

Regard now the wonderful flexibility which is observable in the varied transpositions of human thought, the word of man.

To think with the brain, to speak with the mouth, to hear with the ears, to write with the pen, to read with the eyes, is commonplace, because it is an every day affair ; and one does not reflect upon it. And yet—the dumb, who speak with their hands, the deaf, who read the speech straight from your lips ; the blind, who pick up the word with their fingers from the pages of Braille—that appears more astonishing, because one is less accustomed to it. But here is something quite extraordinary.

There is at Larnay, near Poitiers, a young girl, deaf, blind and dumb from her birth, who consequently had never registered in her brain any notion of the external world, and who lived an entirely animal life, isolated in black night and perpetual silence.

A nun undertook the mad task of entering into communication with this "*Soul in Prison*;" to bring down a ray of light into the depth of this wretchedness, to instruct this imprisoned mind, through the thick walls of her dungeon, whose door was never opened. By a prodigy of ingenious and patient charity, she succeeded to such a degree that Marie Heurtin possesses to-day an intellectual culture which might fill with envy the best pupils in our schools.

This history has been written : it is worth reading.[1]

Marie Heurtin cannot, since she is blind, read on the lips, like the deaf, nor follow with her eyes the mimicry of the dumb, but she reads the raised writing of the blind ; she speaks the dumb language, and at a bewildering speed. She has her own original manner of delivering a public lecture. With the left hand she follows the story in the book ; with the other she translates it word by word to her companions.

Smiling, alert, her hands in the hands of her little friend Anne Marie Poqet, infirm like her, she prattles gaily, but without any sound of words.

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(1) *Ames en Prison*. by Louis Arnould, Professor of the University of Poitiers (G. Oudin, Paris and Poitires).

When two dumb persons talk among themselves, without troubling about discretion, she delicately places her hands on the agitating fingers, seizes the signs in their passage, and throws herself smiling into the discussion.

I have seen her, with her fingers placed lightly before the mouth of Sister Marguerite, gather, by her touch on the lips and the tongue, every word as quickly as it was pronounced, in the course of a conversation the Sister was having with me.

And how suggestive is this scene at Larnay. One who can see reads slowly, aloud, with pauses, from a book ; another, blind, the ear attentive, sends the phrases by signs to a deaf mute, who repeats them in the hands of Marie Heurtin, as on a keyboard ; and this thought which she has received in her hands, without seeing or hearing anything, Marie Heurtin registers, in Braille writing, on sheets of paper, for the library of the blind.

Let us stay a moment at this spectacle ; let us follow the Word in its evolutions, and count the stages one by one.

The thought conceived one day in the brain of an author, doubtless spoken by him, written by his hand, set up by compositors, printed and multiplied by the press, extracted from the

book by the eyes of the reader, became again sound and voice on her lips, registered by the ears of the blind girl and copied by her fingers, taken up by the eyes of the deaf mute, deposited in the hands of Marie Heurtin, picked out by her with the needle on the paper, where some delicate movements of blind persons' hands will come later to gather it—this thought has not varied, it has lost nothing. The sign has changed twenty times; twenty times it has changed its form; but these changes have not affected it. Whether one seizes it in the mind, on the lips or from the pen of the author, from the press or the paper at the printing works, in the eyes of the deaf girl, in the ears of the blind girl, from the fingers of the mute, or in the hand of Marie Heurtin, it is always substantially the same.

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If, then, the word of man bends itself so easily to these mulitifarious adaptations, if it can submit with impunity to such metamorphoses, and find itself always identical with itself without loss or deformity, how can we contest the mysteries of the Word of God in the Trinity, the Incarnation and the Eucharist? And, without denying herself, how can reason refuse on the ground of improbability, the humble confession: "I believe and I adore."

THE CONSECRATED HOST.

Antequam loquaris, disce
(*Eccle.*, xviii, 19)

There are babblers whose ever ready ceaseless tongues chatter upon all subjects, and jump from one to another, without getting to the bottom of any ; who, in their silly prattle, like flies, wander at hazard over a thousand objects, alighting first on one, then on another, as it comes, remaining on none for long. They talk about everything with wonderful serenity. The more agile their minds in the management of words, the less is it embarrassed by ideas. What they say does not count for much : and it does not do much harm, except when, as too often is the case, they betake themselves with deplorable flippancy to religious questions. It is hard to forgive them for the trouble which intentionally or unintentionally, their unconsidered words bring to simple souls.

Of a different order are those others, more sensible, who reflect and think, who are well read in books, and have experienced life. They are sufficiently informed to be reserved in their conversation. They do not talk willingly of things with which they are not familiar.

It is because the uneducated person has no idea of what is lacking to him that he moves with ease in the narrow circle of his knowledge. He sees nothing beyond, and thinks he knows all ; hence his assurance.

The true scientist, on the contrary, is modest, precisely because, at each step that he takes, his horizon enlarges, and in the measure that he advances so does he discover new regions to explore. And so, less occupied with what he has learned than preoccupied with what he does not know, he feels himself crushed by the immensity of the spaces which stretch far before him ; this impression makes him timid.

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The domain of science has no limits. One never finds the end : it begins in a grain of dust, and it mounts up to God.

The sum total of the results which have been acquired is already so heavy that no single human intelligence can, by itself alone, sustain the weight. And the field of exploration is so vast that the most robust brain cannot compass it. The load is divided. The labour is shared. The word Science is written in the plural. Science is divided into a number of sciences ; a distribution is made, and it is enough for each

one to cultivate his plot. At 18 or 20 years, students are forced to specialize: that is to say, that in order to do serious scientific work, to become really capable, even in the purely natural order, to speak of something with competence, they are obliged to restrain themselves, to concentrate their investigations on a particular object, and to exclude the rest. And if they succeed, after many years, and at the cost of much labour, in throwing a little light on a little corner, they achieve glory: their name passes down to posterity: they are scientists! Not that they know all science, but, on one point, they are Masters.

Ask of them an opinion, a judgment upon a question foreign to their work; nine times out of ten they will excuse themselves; they will reply that it does not enter into their branch of study; that they are not competent to answer. For, contrary to the babbler and the uneducated, who never doubt about anything, the men of learning avow, with utter simplicity, that they know nothing of a subject which they have not learned.

This wise hesitation which is one of the forms of intellectual probity, is universal in the regions of the higher knowledge. Men of the world too have this tact, which is one of the

signs of good education. Why, then, does one find no trace of it as soon as one approaches the domain of religion; and why do these same men, so reserved before, adventure here with the hardihood and the self-sufficiency of the uneducated?

So long as one is discussing chemistry, geology, medicine, or astronomy, any of what may be called the lesser sciences, since they do not pass beyond the natural order, they regard it as a matter of common-sense to defer to specialists, they admit their imcompetence. But if one is discussing the transcendental sciences—philosophy and theology—which have for their object, not the material world, but our soul—not the works of God but God Himself—the tune changes, the attitude is different; there is no longer incompetence.

Upon this ground, the most elevated, the most delicate, they have no embarrassments. They comport themselves as though on public property. They talk, they write, they decide with an air, not always knowing even the meaning of the words they use. Yet before making use of a language they should at least become acquainted with its meaning, and before contesting or denying, know what it is they contest or deny.

One never grows weary of replying to the

questions of a fair mind which seeks to be informed ; but one cannot support without anger the irrelevances, frivolous or solemn, of fools and coxcombs—airy critics and mud-slingers, who joke or blame or condemn without knowing; bitter censors, and iconoclasts, whose word is sharp and whose pen is hard, who bring as a grievance against the Church doctrines which have never been hers.

One finds among them some who are sincere. There are some who are well instructed—for one can be instructed, eminent even, in certain matters, and yet absolutely bare of theology, for the simple reason that they have pushed on so far in scientific culture, but have ceased at eleven years (if they have ever made them) their religious studies.

How can they, in such conditions, reason with knowledge of the subject ? They attack formulas of which they possess neither the sense nor the implications. They do not understand them, or they understand them badly, and they assume an attitude of revolt against unreal or deformed conceptions which they take for dogma. Hence so many false judgments.

How the fogs and shadows would dissipate if they had only some properly co-ordinated notions of sane philosophy.

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Theology is not an isolated, solitary science, which sulks by itself, on the remote heights of far away. True, it hovers in the high regions of the supernatural order, it penetrates Heaven ; but it joins at its lower end with philosophy. It requires its co-operation. It borrows from it its language and its methods.

On the other side, no science is foreign to philosophy: mathematics, physics, chemistry, biology, medicine—all, at their highest point, abut on philosophy. And the ideal philosopher, before approaching philosophy, should possess the synthesis at least of all human knowledge.

Happily, practical faith does not exact these long and laborious initiations. One arrives more surely and more quickly through purity of heart and humility than through science.

Our Holy Mother the Church has authority to guard the deposit of revelation, to interpret the doctrine, and to teach the faithful. We have not personally to elaborate our belief. For that we have neither the time nor the means. We receive it from our bishops under the control and guarantee of the supreme Pastor : the children live on the patrimony of the family.

But, if it pleases any one to elucidate this or that problem of the Faith, to plunge into a

question, to produce, upon one or another mystery, some theological work, for self-instruction, or even, in a spirit of hostility, for combative purposes, a recourse to philosophy is indispensable, if he would know the meaning of words and render the exact sense of dogmatic formulæ. Otherwise his study will be profitless, and his attack disloyal.

As regards the interpretation of the Eucharist, it is worth while to pause at the beginning of the attempt to state precisely the structure of the Sacrament, and circumscribe the dogma within its proper limits, by trying to trace the line of demarcation which separates the free field of philosophic investigations from the domain reserved to faith.

I

Because by sin man fell to the last degree of moral abjectness we saw, at Bethlehem, the Divine Word in the last degree of destitution and poverty, lying in straw, humiliated in man's flesh: the Love of God, stretched out towards us, bent over us, lowered to us, in order that no form of suffering or of sin, could say afterwards, in regarding the Crib, and, above all, the Cross, " He has not come for me, since He left me behind Him, lower than He, and has not descended to me."

But the Incarnation had not its reason in itself; it was a stage, not an end. The Child in the Crib did not come to stay there. He is there only in passing. He goes elsewhere.

And can one say that He goes to Calvary? Calvary, too, is only a stage, or, rather, a phase of the Redemption: for the sacrifice of the Cross is a payment; the bringing of salvation into the world, the universal Expiation, in the sense that it was made for all, and that all are called to receive its benefits. It too, is a halt, not the terminus.

Sin is not, properly speaking, in the world. It is *in the souls* of men, a stain and a disease.

It infects every one. And when the remedy is found, when it is in one's hand, it still remains to take it, if one would be cured, and apply it to the disease : the Redemption, once made for all on Calvary, must be *applied to the soul,* to each soul taken separately, one by one, through the Sacraments. The Blood of the Lamb is capable of washing away the sins of the world, it is true ; but it will not wash away mine unless it penetrates into me, to the very root of the evil.

That is why the Redeemer did not stay at Calvary: He descended to the Eucharist. And, the Tabernacle, again, is for Him only a place of waiting : He would go to the souls of men in Communion.

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Here is the point of junction, the term, at which the Redemption again meets man. The Crib and the Cross lead on to the Eucharist, and reach their goal in the Communion : *accepit panem,* the bread in His Hands, His eyes raised to Heaven, He consecrated it, and then said, " This is my flesh ! this is my blood ! Take and eat." One cannot dream of a gift more absolute, a union more intimate, an action more penetrating: His flesh, His blood, man's nourishment !

Regard a young mother with her child, radiant in the pride of her maternity. She laughs, she sings, she plays with the baby. She has her naive words, her infantine gestures, which cause others to smile. She makes herself little, that he may not be so far from her. She presses him to her heart, that there may be no distance between him and her, that he may be one with her. What she wants to reach, that which she seeks through the flesh, is the soul! For her child is an intelligent being who thinks and loves, who will by and by understand her tenderness and respond to it—an immortal being, who comes from God, and should return to God. It is that for which she watches, which she waits for, and provokes—the awakening of the soul—an echo to her appeals, a light in the look, a smile upon the lips. She embraces him as though she would suffocate him—as if she wanted to break the envelope of flesh which hides her child's soul from her. In this abandonment of love, in which she is beside herself, as in an ecstacy, she says a hundred times the word which betrays her hunger and her thirst, her need of placing her soul in communion with the soul of her child: "I will eat you." She says it, and she would do it, if she could. But she cannot. Why? Because the body hinders her.

And then, to give herself the illusion of doing it, she devours him with kisses.

But, better still, she gives herself to be eaten by him, so that the life which he has had from her may still nourish itself in her. She delivers to him her substance, her flesh and her blood, under the softened and sweet form of her milk.

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The love which He has put into the mother's heart, God has experienced in His own Heart.[1] And this total gift of one's being of which mothers have the instinct He has Himself carried to its uttermost limits.

He also, with infinite sweetness, has approached us, and abased Himself, to bring Himself down to us, to our level. In the Crib, we have seen Him no greater than a little child. His divinity was, so to say, extinguished in humanity.

But that did not suffice. He was near us, He had reduced Himself to our stature; He still could not come altogether into our soul: *His body hindered Him.* And so, as He had effaced His divinity in the Incarnation, He effaced His humanity in the Eucharist.

(1) *Numquid oblivisci potest mulier infantum suum? Et si illa oblita fuerit, ego tamen non obliviscar tui.* (*Is.*, xlix, 15).

He was God and man, there in Palestine, and one did not see His divinity. He is God and man in the Eucharist, and one does not see His humanity.

In cruce latebat sola Deitas
At hic latet simul et humanitas!

On the Cross He was disfigured, so that Isaias could no more recognize Him.[2] In the Eucharist it is still worse; there is nothing left, there is total effacement; *exinanivit semetipsum*.[3]

He is there on the altar, reduced to this little thing that we call the Host, which a child's breath can blow to the ground. Sometimes one can believe that the whole of the sun has entered into a drop of dew which in the morning trembles on the tip of a blade of grass in the field, but it is only a reflexion, an illusion.

In the Host, Jesus is there entirely, though one cannot see Him.

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But the fact of the real Presence is not the object of this study. The proofs which establish it are set out at length in manuals and theological treatises and in the sermons of our great

(2) *Is.*, liii, 3.
(3) *Ph.*, ii, 7.

preachers. Besides, it would be enough to read attentively the sixth chapter of St. John, where is summarized, as in an official statement, the Eucharistic promise, with the bitter discussions which it has provoked; it would be enough to bring together those formal, incisive declarations which confounded the Capharnaites, and the solemn and categorical affirmation at the Last Supper: *Hoc est corpus meum*! in order to be convinced that Jesus *wished* to give us His Body and His Blood in the Eucharist;[1] and consequently, if He had not succeeded, it is because He could not. But thus to reduce the question of the Real Presence to a question of Divine Power is to solve it.

We are not however discussing the fact. We

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(1) In the Syro-Chaldean language which Jesus spoke there is an abundance of words to express the idea of figure and symbol: one counts forty of them. Why did He not employ them, if He intended merely to leave us a simple memorial? But on the contrary, He builds upon, completes, and insists upon the idea of identifying his eucharistic being with His flesh, His members, His body which the Jews would nail the next day to the Cross, and with the blood which would flow from His wounds: "This is my body, *quod pro vobis tradetur*, which will be delivered for you." (1 *Cor.*, xi, 20)—"This is my blood *qui effundetur in remissionem peccatorum*," which will be shed for the remission of sins." (*Matt.*, xxvi, 28 *Mark*, xiv, 20). The Greek is more formal with its repetition of the article: τοῦτο ἐστίν τὸ σῶμα μου, τὸ ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν . . . ; τό αἷμα μοῦ, τὸ ὑπὲρ ὑμων . . . And the Syrian text says, expressively: "This is my own body."

believe, as the Church has always believed and taught,[1] that the Eucharist is something other than a symbol, a figure, an image, a representation, a resemblance, a simple memorial, a more or less expressive remembrance of Jesus, but that it is Himself entirely, " under the species or appearances of bread and wine, in truth, in reality, in substance," according to the words of the Council of Trent : *Vere, realiter ac substantialiter* (*Trid. ses.*,xiii, can. 1).

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(1) It was in the Ninth Century that there appeared the monk Paschase Radbert, the first who taught, in an explicit manner, the wonderful poem of a God enclosed in bread "(*Hist. de France t.*, 1, p. 388) "

Michelet, in thus writing without the least hesitation, gives proof of unpardonable flippancy. He had certainly not read the 22 chapters of the *Treatise on the Flesh and Blood of Our Lord*, which he takes for a novelty, and upon which he bases his audacious affirmation. For the Abbe of Corbie did not content himself with summarizing, under a more didactic form than had hitherto been used, the doctrine of the Eucharist : he was careful to collate and to group around his thesis the testimony and documents of previous centuries.

Michelet should have told us how this poor Benedictine monk could, from his cloister in Champagne, force the acceptance of a dogma so transcendent upon the universal Church, and, above all, upon the Oriental Church, already at war with the Papacy.

The truth is, that, solidly built upon the categorical word of Jesus Christ, corroborated and confirmed, from age to age, by the apostolic Fathers, by the doctors, by the Councils, by the monuments of the past, faith in the Real Presence had never suffered eclipse.

The testimonies are joined together as the strong links of a chain through the Epistles of St. Paul to the Gospel. Bellarmine

That which interests us at the moment is rather the *manner* than the fact of the Real Presence, for, in this Sacrament, there is this strange thing, that that which has the appearance of being present in reality is not present ; while that which is present has no appearance of being there.

(*De Euchar.*) Du Perron (*Traié de l' Euch.*) and others have enumerated them. In the Eighth Century, to cite only the principal, there are St. John Damascene (*De Fide Orthod.*, iv, 13) and St. Cyril of Alexandria (*In Matt.*, xxvi, 27), St. Hilary in the Fifth Century (*De Trini.*, viii, 14) ; St. Chrysostom (*Homil*, 13, 33, 50, 83) St. Gregory of Nyssa (*Orat. Catech*, c. 37), St. Cyril of Jerusalem (*Catech.*, 22, 38.), St. Ambrose (*Lib.* iv, *de Sacram* ix. *De Myst.*), in the Fourth Century ; St Cyprian (*Serm de Coena, de Lapsis*) Origen (*Hom.* iv *in Num.*), Tertullian (*De Resur. Carnis* 8, *adv. Marc.* iv, 40), in the Third Century ; St. Irenaeus (*Cont Haer.*, iv, v), St. Justin (*Ad Ephes.*), in the Second Century ; in the First, St. Ignatius (*Ad Martyr.*), which brings us to Apostolic times.

All the liturgies, both of the West and of the East, are unanimous in their agreement.

Why fasting Communion, if the Host is only a Symbol ?

Again, is it not faith in the Real Presence which produced that anxiety to shelter the holy mysteries from the profanations of Pagans which explains and justifies the Law of Secrecy, in the first centuries ?

Whence comes it that at that time the Christians were accused of sacrificing an infant and drinking its blood at their assemblies, but from the fact of the Communion and the Eucharist ? The notion of the Sacrament had transpired, and the care which was taken to keep it secret gave colour to the calumny.

Is it not, again, to this most significant discipline of the Arcana that one must attribute the ambiguity of certain eucharistic texts of that epoch, which seem full of hesitation and reticencies ? This vagueness was intentional. They spoke plainly among themselves ; but as soon as they felt less security, above all in letters, they only

We are in the full flood of mystery and miracle. We explain neither the mystery nor the miracle. But will it not be profitable, alike for faith and for piety, to examine this dogmatic formula, with a view of escaping from vagueness, and of projecting a little light, if not upon the mystery, at least upon the avenues which lead to it?

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When, in the Mass, the priest, armed with the power of Christ, has pronounced the Divine *fiat* over the bread—the all-powerful echo of the

expressed themselves in covert phrases, so as not to say more than was necessary.

The expressive paintings, in the Catacombs, embarrassed also by the law of secrecy, have equally a documentary value of the first order. There is for example, the celebrated fresco of the cemetery of Calixtus, in the Chamber called "Of the Sacraments:" a priest at the altar, his hand extended over a loaf of bread, under which is hidden a fish, the ἰχθύς the avowed symbol of Christ; then, again, the Fish, under a basket of loaves in which is inserted a phial filled with wine; the Eucharistic banquet etc., (*Cf. de Rossi, Roma Sotterranea*)

I was present, on the 2nd of February, 1893, at the solemn audience of the Ottoman delegation, at the Vatican, charged by the Sultan to hand to Leo xiii an inscription of the Second Century found in Turkey, and of which a fragment was already known. A bishop, Abercius, there recounts that having travelled up and down the world "he has seen everywhere the Christians professing the same faith, and nourishing themselves, under the veil of wine and of pure wheaten bread, with the ἰχθύς the Divine Fish which the Virgin without stain had first received."

The same day, an Englishman who possessed the other fragment telegraphed to the Pope that he would willingly dispossess himself of it, in order to reconstitute the precious document.

all-powerful words which made the first consecration (for it is Jesus Christ's own words which perpetuate the Eucharist)—when the priest has said : "*Hoc est corpus meum*"—all is changed, and nothing is changed.

Nothing is changed to his eyes : he sees only bread, as before. All is changed to his faith :

This imposing array of texts and monuments impresses and troubles those Protestants who seek, with a sincere mind, to enlighten themselves, all the more since the attitude of Luther is not of a nature to reassure them in their negation.

He, in terms, declares himself conquered by the evidence : " I have laboured hard," he says, " at this question, but I have been vanquished ; there is no way of escape, the Gospel text is too clear *Jam saepe gravibus curis, in hoc materia desudavi ; verum ego me captum video, nulla elabendi via relicta est : textus evangelii nimis apertus est*" (*Epist. ad Argent.*)

Again he says, speaking of those of his party who denied the Eucharist : " I defy them to bring me a Bible in which it is written ' This is the sign of my body.' As they cannot, let them keep silence. *Ostendant biblias in quibus scriptum est : Hoc est corporis mei signum. Quod si non possent praestare, imperent stylo suo quietem.*" (*Cf. Apol. De Coena Domini*)

Melancthon, too, could find no means of getting away from the dazzling clearness of the text. " The words of Christ flash like lightning, and the terrified mind had nothing to reply. *Ista verba : Hoc est corpus meum ! fulmina sunt. Quid his opponet mens perterrefacta ?* (*Cf. De Veritate Corporis et Sanguinis*).

Did not Henry VIII of England, whose morals alone threw him into heresy, write a doctrinal exposition, a complete apologetic thesis, concerning the Eucharist, in refutation of the Protestants of Germany ?—*Assertio Septem Sacramentorum.*

The embarrassment of others is no less significant than the admissions of those above quoted. Bellarmine has collected, from the discourses, letters and pamphlets of doctors of the Reformation nearly 400 different interpretations of the text, *Hoc est corpus meum* (*Cf. De Euch.*, l. i, c. 8).

he bows down, and adores Jesus Christ, present and living in the Sacrament.

The Eucharist is Christ, Christ only. It is not Christ and bread—Christ in the bread as in a sheath, Christ mixed with the bread as water is mixed with wine, Christ united to the bread, confounded with the bread, as fire with the red hot iron : *there is no longer any bread.* It has not disappeared to be replaced by the Body of Christ; *it has become,* by conversion, the Body of Christ.

Perhaps, if we knew better what, before the consecration, the bread was in its intimate structure, we should comprehend better what the consecrated Host is.

We strike here against the extraordinarily complex problem of the essence of things, which thinkers of all ages have attacked with passion, but without success, since they have never been able to tell us of what matter—a grain of dust, a blade of grass, or a living cell—consists, in its first elements, in the ground of its being, in its final analysis.

Scientists and philosophers have accumulated the most arduous works upon this enigma : their systems break down, one after another, or lose themselves in the obscurity of conjecture, like the *oued* in the moving sands of the desert.

The theory which, for the past twenty or thirty years, has been extolled in the laboratories and from professorial chairs is to-day hotly contested, but those who attack it bring forward nothing satisfactory in its place.[1] And to judge from the glimmers which arise, here and there, in this field of exploration, as men get to closer grips with the question, it seems not unlikely that modern science will eventually, in its groping through the mists, join hands with the rejuvenated conclusions of the old scholastics, between whom there is no more than a step.

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These are regions forbidden to the outsider. We will not embark upon the discussions of the schools. Some indications will suffice for us; and we will avoid over-technical terms, though perhaps to the detriment of precision. But we shall not suffer much on that account, for, in these abstract matters, precision is not always synonymous with clarity.

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(1) Cf. Bergson, *L'Evolution Creatrice*; Em. Boutroux: *De La Contingence des Lois de Nature*; William James: *Précis of Psychology*; *Hoffding, Outline of Philosophy founded in Experience.*

II

We distinguished, in everything belonging to the material world, a stable, fundamental, essential part, which is called *substance* ; and another part, more mobile, and accessory to the other, to which we give the name of *accidents* or appearances. They are also called, indifferently *species*—by analogy with the word *specious* : a reasoning is specious when it deals with the surface rather than with the root of the matter, and has only an appearance of logic.

The substance—the essential—is the first and principal, the immutable root of being of which the senses have not cognisance—*the thing itself*, in its constitutive elements, that which determines scientifically its nature and class.

The accidents come afterwards (*accedere*) ; they are secondary, added to the substance, like a cloak—the aspect of things, in opposition to their inner reality ; their appearance, their physiognomy, the look which they have, the manner in which they present themselves, all the bundle of qualities and peculiarities which are cognisable by the senses.

They have not all the same importance. Some, like quantity, extent, and certain properties

are so closely bound up with the substance, that one regards them as identified with it, and natural powers cannot separate them from it. Others, on the contrary, more variable and more mobile, come and go, are modified or disappear without injuring the integrity of the thing—such as colour, taste, odour, form, temperature, &c.

These accidental qualities which affect the substance are not put on as a cloth upon a table, nor adjusted like the skin to the body, a slight covering which one has only to break in order to reveal the naked substance. On the contrary they are an emanation from the substance—not its being, but *its manner of being*, an exterior which is one with the interior. They spring from it, while at the same time enveloping it with a covering ; they only exist in it and by it. There are white objects, round objects, hard objects. But the whiteness, the roundness, the hardness, have no subsistence of their own. They do not float alone in the air. They need a substance in which to exist, and to which they can belong.

The accidents are the vesture and the instrument of the substance. It works with some, it hides itself under others ; for the substance remains beneath (*sub stat*) ; it dissimulates itself

beneath the accidents, it is the principle and underlying support of the phenomena.

Definitions are concerned with the substance, descriptions with the accidents. The names which we give to things, and which we therefore call *substantives*, refer to the substance; the *adjectives*, and qualifying terms, refer to the accidents.

In a piece of bread, for example, the substance is the actual being of the bread, that which makes it bread, and not wood or stone; the accidents are the various qualities grafted upon the bread, which belong to it, but are not, in this view, essential to it: it is white, or it is grey, soft or hard, well or badly baked, of bad or good appearance—it doesn't matter; it is always bread.

Generally, substances are seen with their natural appearances; they are what they appear to be. Stone, wood, bread, have a well-known aspect—an appearance which, without other examination, enables them to be recognized by the eye. If an object presents itself to me under the general appearance of stone or wood, I infer therefrom, by experience and habit, that it is substantially bread or stone. Our entire practical life, all our reasonings, are based on this principle: accidents signalize

and reveal substances to us, just as their uniform signalizes and reveals to us the monk, the soldier or the sailor.

One says truly that one cannot trust in appearances : it is prudent to look twice at them. Why ? Because this connexion between substances and their normal appearances is not close enough to justify trusting it unreservedly.

In the first place, there may be likeness of aspect and diversity of substance : how many liquids resemble water, but are not water? Conversely, we see a substance clothe itself in the most disparate forms. What more unlike than a diamond and coal ? Chemically they are the same. Things, like human beings, give themselves false and deceptive airs ; they make themselves pass for what they are not. There are substances dressed up in borrowed accidents, accidents stolen from other substances—lying accidents, which lead us into error concerning the realities which they disguise. We take common wooden boards, painted with art, for precious marbles. All that glitters like gold is not gold. One sometimes drinks for wine a beverage that can boast but a very vague relationship with the vine.

How do these imitations, these adulterated foods, these artificial products, deceive us, ex-

cept by presenting the appearance, clothing themselves in the accidents of honest substances?

Sometimes even we see accidents which do not cover any substance at all. What is there of real or substantial in the image which is reflected by a mirror? Nothing—absolutely nothing, nothing but a fiction, empty appearance, but so real looking, so specious, that one has to take care not to be duped. Others, besides kittens, have been caught by this illusion.

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Let us return now to the Eucharist. This well-established division between substance and accidents has already placed our formula in a clearer light.

The consecrated Host is entirely the *substance of Christ* under the *appearances of bread.*

In bread we have the complete being, substance and accidents—the substance of bread and the appearances of bread. The consecration has seized only upon the substance; it has not touched the accidents. It has caused the bread to disappear by *transubstantiation*, which in utilizing it suppresses it. For the bread is only a hindrance, it is not wanted. It is not the substance of bread which is offered to me in

the Eucharist; it is the substance of Christ. Now, since the entire substance of bread has been converted into the substance of Christ, *there is no longer any bread*, not the tiniest atom.[1] Present a Host to a mirror, and what do you see? Forms and colours, vain appearances—exactly what you see when fixing your eyes upon the Host, nothing more, nothing less: there is no more bread, or substance of bread, under the sacramental species than there is in the reflexion, in the counterpart of the Host, which is given by the mirror.

But Christ, who wished to establish Himself in the Eucharist, concealing Himself at the same time, *has preserved the accidents of bread.* In this cloak, abandoned by the substance of bread, He has draped His own substance, in order to give It to us vested in the outer forms of bread: *ego sum panis vivus.* He needed it to shelter the mystery; it was to be a cover for the Sacrament, a sensible sign which should reveal Him in localizing Him, a light veil which would hide His real presence, and should be also a symbol of the nourishing effects of communion.[2]

(1) *Trid. Sess,* xiii, can. 2.

(2) How can simple appearances, phenomena so precarious, so rigidly regulated and conditioned by the substance, be deprived of it, and yet survive? That has practically no importance for us. It is a pure question of curiosity.

Why then talk about an error of the senses : *visus, tactus, gustus, in te fallitur* ? If the accidents remain after the consecration, where is the error of the senses ?

It may be that they are not deceived, but all the same if we trusted in them we should deceive ourselves. The forms and the colours which they perceive are there, as says the Council of Trent ; *Manentibus duntaxat speciebus panis et vini* (*Conc. Trid. Sess.*, xiii, can. 2).

We know that in this Sacrament all the laws of nature are overturned, that miracle protects the mystery at each step, and that all the questions which arise upon it are incapable of a natural solution.

Some have recourse to illusion and mirage, and only admit the existence, after the consecration, of phantom appearances ; our senses receive their impressions directly from the First Cause from God, as before they had received them from secondary causes. This theory, which attacks the integrity of the Sacrament, in sup pressing the sensible sign, is inadmissible.

Of the various opinions put forward to explain the permanence of accidents, that of St. Thomas, called *Absolute Accidents*, is so much the more credited in theology since the Council of Trent has consecrated it.

All the phenomena of colour, taste, weight, are in reality only secondary energies, dependent upon a master force, the substantial force, which sustains them and uses them, and whose disappearance draws them in its train. But, if this superior force is immediately replaced by another, why should they not continue to exist and act, and all the better since they have not their root directly in the substance ; for the greater part of them arise from quantity, from mass, which is itself a pure accident. Thus, then, a certain subsistence is miraculously received, a borrowed autonomy, to replace the natural support which has disappeared, and, in its turn, it sustains the others.

The report made is sincere. But this veracious testimony of agents, just capable of teaching us about the outside of things, but radically incompetent in regard to substances, draws us upon a false scent. That which is immediately connected with our sense perceptions is exact: there are the form and colour of bread; the error is not there; it is farther away, *in the inference drawn by the intelligence*, which, acting upon the information, would conclude, from the reality of the appearances, that the bread is present. Now, it is precisely against that that faith, the criterion of the invisible,[1] warns us, in teaching that, transubstantiated, the bread no longer exists.

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Here all is miracle, the manner, the state, the effects. So where are we to look for analogies, in default of comparison?

In nature, we come across mysterious elaborations of substances—alloys, exchanges, fusions, marriages and divorces, incessant transformations. We see subsidiary substances seized by superior substances, which decompose them and assimilate them. Bread, one may say, is only the resultant of a sort of transubstantiation of mineral matters, in the living cells of wheat.

(1) "*Fides, argumentum non apparentium*" (*Heb.*, xl, 1).

Nutrition works another sort of transubstantiation in the organs of a man. Count the stages. The grass feeds upon the juices of the earth, in the obscure travail of vegetation. The sheep eats the grass, and in its turn, is eaten by man. And these chemical elements, taken up in the field by the avid mouths of root suckers, by the stomachs of leaves, mount upwards through all the steps of the ladder of life, are changed into fecund sap in the tissue of the plant, become the flesh and blood of man, and participate, in his brain, in the work of the intellect.

This is true. But these substances, thus drawn into the vortex of life, never totally disappear. One can follow them, and they can be traced at each phase of the metamorphosis. They combine among themselves. One can measure the share which each has in the common mass. They submit to the influence of organisms which absorb and reject them in turn. They themselves react on the agents which they nourish. There are only in the result modifications, slow and incomplete transformations; but in the Eucharist, as in the miracle at the wedding feast of Cana,[1] the transubstantiation is sudden; it is radical, there are neither combinations nor alloys nor reaction of

(1) *Aquam vinam factam* (*John*, ii, 9).

any sort. The substance of bread is no longer there ; it brings nothing, it leaves nothing, it does not in anyway affect the substance of Christ.

III

Why this word, and always this word—the *substance* of Christ? Because it expresses just what is meant, neither more nor less, because it corresponds exactly to the sacramental reality which is hidden beneath the sacred species; because it delimits, and determines with precision, the proportions and conditions of the Real Presence.

Substance is being in its constitutive elements, after abstraction of the natural accidents. Consequently the substance of Christ is Himself, the Incarnate Word, with His divine nature, with His human nature, body and soul, but without the externals of flesh—height, weight, form, aspect, etc. Himself in His essential integrity, but no longer in the material conditions in which the Incarnation had placed Him—*as real*, but in *another manner*, in a special, miraculous, supernatural manner.

This was made clear, at the beginning, in the course of that dispute when the faith of the best was almost shipwrecked, and when the Jews in their stubborn indignation would not understand. "How can this man give us His flesh to eat?" For, at the same time that He

maintained the uncompromising rigour of the dogma, he repelled their gross interpretation of it.

The bread that He would give would be His flesh, *caro mea vere est panis* ; and in the Cenacle He returns to the same language. He says, in presenting the transubstantiated bread : " Take and eat, this is *my body !* " Mark well *His body*, His own. He does not speak of some human body, which would only be flesh and blood like ours, which one could liken to the meats which are sold in the markets, with the bleeding flesh which one cuts with a knife, and serves cooked at table. " That," He says, " would be purposeless for sanctification : *caro non prodest quidquam.*" He speaks of His flesh, His own flesh, associated and bound up with the Divinity, that flesh which clothes the Word, *Verbum caro factum*, of the coming apotheosis of which He reminded them in a brief evocation of the glories of the Ascension. " All this scandalizes you to-day because your thoughts are carnal ; when you shall have seen Me ascend to My Father, with this same body of which I speak to you," you will not be shocked. Rise, purify your conceptions : " The words which I have spoken to you are spirit and life."[1]

(1) " *Hoc vos scandilizat ? Si ergo videritis Filium hominis ascendentum ad Patrem, ubi erat prius ?.....Spiritus est qui vivificat. Caro non prodest quidquam.....Verba quae ego vobis locutus sum, spiritus et vita sunt.*" (*John*, vi, 63).

Thus, on the one hand, He affirms the reality of the eating—the word is repeated seven times on half a page—and, on the other hand, He discards the manner which would be repugnant : there must be, then, a sacramental state, a special state, to fulfil this double intention.

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In nature there abound examples of these changes of state which modify the aspect and the properties of material substances, without altering their specific constitution.

Phosphorus, in its normal state, is white, very poisonous, inflammable at 60 degrees. If its density augments a little, under the action of solar light, or by some laboratory process, it passes to red, is harmless, loses its characteristic luminousness, and does not become inflammable until past 260 degrees.

Water, which shakes at the least breath of wind, which sleeps at the bottom of wells, which flows in fountains, is a food. When seized by cold it becomes fixed, it hardens and becomes solid and sonorous, and can be carved like stone. If it is worked upon by fire, it is disturbed, it is agitated, it bounds more lightly and ardently than the wind ; it is a force which it is hard to control ; it puts a

whole world in movement in our factories; it carries a train at a speed of eighty miles an hour. Now the water that we drink, the ice, and the steam, are the same water in different states; and in whatever form the chemist finds it, it is always the same, H_2O, hydrogen and oxygen.

Who can say where the adaptability and elasticity of matter end? Even light, which travels 75,000 leagues in a second, is yet a material thing! Has this refining of matter, this upward movement towards ever greater subtlety, reached to its supreme degree in the ethereal regions of the imponderable? Is there, for material substance, after the three classic states—solid, liquid and gaseous—above the ether, a fourth state? Yes, assuredly, if one penetrates into the supernatural order. St. Paul does not permit us to doubt of this, "All flesh" he says, "is not the same flesh. There are terrestial bodies, and celestial bodies."

The flesh of man, which in this world is allied to the animal, once resuscitated from the dead, "will be spiritual,"[1] in such a degree that it can

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(1) "*Non omnis caro, eadem caro.....Sed alia corpora caelestia et corpora terrestria.....Sic et resurrectio mortuorum. Seminatur in corruptione, surget in incorruptione. Seminatur corpus animale, surget corpus spiritale*" (1 *Cor.*, xv, 39).

be called a spiritual body, *corpus spiritale*, so much will it approach the nature of spirit.

Thus we may see how by adaptation the Body of Jesus is prepared for the Eucharist: for it is always the body which embarrasses, but here we have It in almost a *spiritual state*. It is not spirit, but It participates in the property of spirit. It is above the laws which rule matter. It is no longer embarrassed by the weight of its bulk. It comes and goes with the ease of angelic natures: suddenly It appears, suddenly It disappears, like a shadow. More easily than a ray of light through crystal, it penetrates into the Cenacle, *janus clausis*, the doors being closed, and well closed, closed by fear, *propter metum Judaeorum*.[2] And no illusion is possible. "It is I, *ego ipse sum*, Myself in flesh and bone: look, touch, *videte, palpate*; a spirit has not flesh and bones, as you see Me have: *spiritus carnem et osa non habet, sicut me videtis habere.*" Eight days afterwards, the doors still closed, there is the same scene; and St. Thomas satisfies *himself by minute examination of the reality of His flesh*.[3]

Glorified bodies, then, almost like spirits, can be present without occupying materially any place.

(2) *John*, xx, 18.
(3) *Ib.*, xx, 27.

One step more, and we shall reach the point. It is the glorious body of Christ, the same which sits at the right hand of the Father, which we adore under the veil of the Sacrament, and Which we receive in Communion: but not absolutely in the state in which It is in Heaven, but alloyed (if one may so phrase it) with certain secondary and encumbering properties, not essential to the integrity of Its existence.

The Church teaches us that He is present, not in His natural state, nor even in the state of the glorified body, but according to the manner of presence proper to substances, *per modum substantiae,* "in truth, in reality, in substance." These three expressions are not synonymous; the third explains the other two.

The whole mystery of the Real Presence turns, then, upon substance. Transubstantiation from substance to substance has been made. The substance of Christ should be found therefore under the sacred species *according to the manner and in the condition* in which previously the substance of bread was found under the accidents.

It has been easy to mark the distinction between substance and accidents—that is to say, between that which appears on the out-

side and that which is hidden within. One can also, without very great difficulty, differentiate substances among themselves, because their manifestations and properties betray, in a certain measure, their incognito. But to say what is substance is another affair.

The essential nature of matter subsists still, in chemistry, in the infinitesimal particles, in the atom of simple bodies, in the molecule of composite bodies. But of what are the atom and the molecule made? That is a mystery.

One needs to be familiarized with abstractions not to cry out at the paradox when one is told that one has never *seen a substance*, whether of bread or wine, of wood or of stone.

"How, never seen a substance? But we see nothing else around us. There is the bread; there is the water; there is the stone." But listen. There is the bread, the water, and the stone, it is true. You see forms and colours, dimensions and masses, which attest for you the presence of those substances; but you do not see the substances themselves. They evade apprehension by the senses. How can you see them, since they are necessarily and always underneath the appearances?

"That cannot be; I break the envelope, and then I see quite clearly what is within."

Break it ; you will see other forms and other colours ; and that is all. For you will have modified only the modes of its being. Tear, cut ; you will have smaller pieces, the mass will be diminished ; but you will not have reached the substance. With a morsel make crumbs ; with a crumb make particles ; with a particle make dust ; and, when your eye refuses to see more in face of the impalpable, give it a microscope, and go on to the infinitely little, so that in the end, under the last molecule, the last atom, you may come upon the substance : the most powerful instrument will reveal to you all the time only forms and colours. Light your ovens, call to your aid chemical agents ; you will force the matter to liquify itself, to become volatile ; but either the substance will escape in the segregation of its parts, or it will hide itself beneath other accidents.

Whence come those often tragic errors which make us take, on a simple analogy of aspect, the poison for the remedy ? Would the likeness of appearances ever deceive us if we perceived substances directly ? *We should see them diverse, as they are.*

Turn to your mirror : it will give you the exact measure of your visual perceptions. If

you fix your gaze upon an object directly you see no more of it than its reflexion in the glass would show you. Is there an atom of substance in the mirror ?

Bodies, then, do not consist in that which they show us of themselves, in that which we see. The soul of things escapes our senses and our instruments. To what can a being be reduced, in order to remain truly present, not materially, but substantially ? Shall we ever know ?

Now, if we are incapable of *seeing the substance of bread* beneath the appearance of bread before the consecration, why, afterwards should we insist, before believing Christ's word, upon *discerning the other substance,* which is hidden, in the same way, under the sacramental species ?

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That which worries you in your experience, which deludes you and confuses you, in regard to substance, is the mass, the matter, that which one feels, and measures, and weighs in the balance, and which occupies space. But this material quantity *is only an accident,*—of primary importance if you like, though one of which certain schools have exaggerated the importance.

Break the mass in two, into a hundred, a thousand pieces: the quantity is divided into so many fragments, but the substance is not; it subsists entire, and intact in the smallest portion. It is therefore *distinct and independent of the mass.* A tiny crumb of bread is as really —in a chemical sense—bread as the entire loaf. If the piece is bigger, you have more of it, but you do not have it more perfectly. A drop of dew responds to the chemical formula of water —H_2O—no more nor less than the ocean. There is a greater mass of water in the sea, but, apart from that, it is identical; and the difference goes only to the quantity; the substance is the same in both. Specimens and analyses are only a practical application of this principle: it is enough to taste a few drops of wine in order to determine the value of a whole vintage, because the substance of the mass is found, equal to itself, *in each fraction of the mass.*

So, much as I have tried to find the substance beneath the accidents, neither my eyes nor my hand have been able to see or seize it. The steel pincers, the biting flame, the sharp teeth of the acids—none of them has succeeded in making substance speak; it has kept its mask. I do not know its name, for that which one

gives it is not a name : *substance* is the thing which is underneath and nothing more. I do not know it ; but I have not wasted my time in my quest, for, if it obstinately maintains itself underneath, always underneath, I have at least succeeded in comprehending *how it maintains itself* there : it is completely in the whole, and completely in each part of the whole. And that is precisely the manner of the sacramental presence.

Thus, then almost like the soul in the human body, substance is not localized in a definite spot, whence it spreads out, as from a centre into the mass. It is not concentrated at one point rather than at another. It is not parcelled out, or extended, or distributed, in portions. It is neither great nor little. It is neither high nor low, has neither right nor left. Simple and indivisible, it is everywhere at the same time, *without occupying space*, without division or sharing ; not contained nor enclosed, like an object in a particular place, but *present*, entirely here and entirely there ; independent of quantities, and of dimensions. The same quantity of water, for example, dilated by vaporisation, will condense, in its normal state, into a space four or five thousand times less, without having lost an atom of its mass. Astrono-

mers tell us that a thimble would hold the cosmic matter of those immense tails of comets which extend their enormous lengths through space.

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It is hard for me to represent to myself this very special form of real presence, because my imagination is at sea directly it loses touch with the senses, and troubles and obsesses me by persisting always in identifying these two ideas, of presence and of material localization, which *are not the same.* I am unable to conceive how it comes about, but I understand that it is so.[1]

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(1) We too often take the operations of our imagination for the operations of our understanding, and we confuse *unimaginable* with *incomprehensible.* But the intelligence takes count perfectly of certain truths which pass, as one says, the imagination.

How many scientific affirmations, in the purely natural order, are meaningless to the imagination ?

When one is told, for example, that a cannon-ball, travelling at 550 metres a second, would be 9½ years in reaching Neptune ; that light, which comes to us from the sun in 8 minutes and 18 seconds, travelling at 75,000 leagues a second, would be 4 years and 4 months in reaching us from the star nearest the earth (Alpha, of the Centaur), and more than 3,000 years from the farthest star within the range of the telescope ; that the waves of light vibrate, from the red to the ultra violet ray, at rates of 450 to 750 trillions of vibrations a second—we cannot imagine these realities.

Only specialists can follow a demonstration ; others, even the instructed, have to believe on their word.

Therefore there is no justification for allowing the impotence of our imagination in the face of dogmatic statements to hinder an act of faith.

I know that this sacramental state realizes the thought of Jesus, and meets at the same time the objection of the Capharnaites : " How can He give us His flesh to eat ? "

Since the substance is protected against all material attempts to destroy it, by pulling to pieces, *which can only affect the accidents* ; since the acids and drugs of the chemist eat only into the mass and the quantity without impairing its integrity, it is evident that it will not suffer any more by the act of communion ; for everything which at first sight seems repugnant—mastication, swallowing, digestion—acts only upon the accidents, *and they are the accidents of the bread.* We eat, in truth and substantially, the body and blood of Jesus Christ, but under the form of bread, as we would eat bread, without having to violate our natural delicacy and without the accessory envelope of the Sacrament taking us from the divine and substantial realities which it encloses.

It is thus that I understand why, at the end of the Mass, the priest gathers up so carefully

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On the other hand, since we are forced to recognize that we cannot explain much of what passes around us or in us, and since we admit, as we do daily, that no human intelligence can boast of having attained even the limit of *human knowledge*, how can we pretend to delimit the frontiers of divine power, and, from our conceptions, set the measure of the possible and the impossible ?

upon the corporal the smallest particles of the consecrated Host, and why, when he is taken by surprise by the number of communicants, he breaks the Hosts without hesitation. It is because in the Eucharist the substance of Christ behaves like all other substances, it is complete in the Host, and complete *in each part of the Host.*

St. Thomas reminds us of this in the *Lauda Sion*: "*Fracto demum sacramento, ne vacilles*; do not let the broken Host trouble you: *sed memento tantum esse sub fragmento quantum toto tegitur*; remember that He is as completely under a fragment as under the entire Host. For it is not the Thing, the substance, which is broken in two—*nulla rei fit scissura; signi tantum fit fractura*: it is only the sign, the appearances, which are divided."

IV

In the very act of consecration the priest, as if dazzled or overcome by dizziness at the thought of what he is about to do, at his own voice, at what is in his hand, stays a moment, and lets fall from his lips an exclamation, which cuts in two the sacramental formula: "*Mysterium fidei!*"[1] Mystery of faith! Culmina-

(1) Neither the Gospel nor the Epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians have retained this expression, *mysterium fidei*. Nevertheless the Roman liturgy has always contained it. It very probably came from our Lord Himself, for, in such a matter, one can better conceive an abbreviation than an addition. We do not find in St. Matthew or St. Mark the phrase *qui vobis datur*, which St. Luke and St. Paul have officially reported (*Cf. Matt.*, xxvi, 26; *Mark*, xiv, 22; *Luke*, xxii, 19; and 1 *Cor.*, xi, 24).

Mysterium fidei! Is it not something quite different from an exclamation introduced into the formula by way of parenthesis; is it not rather a most significant allusion to a Jewish usage, added, according to the Talmud, to the Mosaic rite of the Pasch: "a cup of wine" is blessed and is called the *Chalice of Benediction*, and also the *Mystery of faith*.

This custom does not symbolize, like the Lamb, the Azymes and the bitter herbs, the deliverance from Egypt, for this ancient episode had for the Jews nothing of the mysterious; it referred to a future liberation, concerning no longer only Israel, but the reign of the Messiah, of so high an order that the cup which represented it needed to be blessed with a benediction appropriate to God. (*Cf. Sohar*, Sulzbach edition, 1684). Thus Christ would connect the new institution with the old Judaic rite: the Chalice of Benediction, the "Mystery of faith," became the Sacrament. So St. Paul told the Corinthians: "The chalice of benediction,

tion of mysteries, and prodigies! Mystery of Love which bends down, and descends, and approaches nearer, ever nearer! Prodigies of omnipotence, which follow the mystery, to cover it at each step! From the Trinity to the Eucharist—measure the sweep! It begins in the most High Heaven; it comes down to this earth. But here God's effort stops: the Tabernacle is the advance post of the Divine love stretched out towards us.

The Word of God waits in the Host, as the human word in the sounds of speech. For the thought is not fixed in the printed ink of books, to remain there unperceived and unemployed. It is there *on a mission*. It aspires to reach the mind of him to whom is has been sent.

But, of itself, it can go no farther. The other must come to it, must bend over the writing, and devour it with his eyes, must disengage the signs, and take it, and nourish himself with it.

And so also Christ Jesus is only reduced to the eucharistic state in order that He may be eaten. He did not say "Take and adore, Take

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is it not the blood of Christ: *calix benedictionis, nonne communicatio sanguiniis Christi est?*" (1 *Cor.*, x, 16).

The "Mystery of faith" which refers to the Chalice of benediction, is therefore simply the ancient name of the symbol applied to the reality.

and preserve, Take and honour "—but, "Take and eat."

And if we do not comprehend, if we do not respond, if we do not come, if we do not take Him, if we do not eat Him, there is repulse and failure; His effort is wasted, His love rebuffed.

The other bread, when we do not want it and we leave it, dries up in the cupboard, and that is all: it is inert, like a block of stone, or a piece of wood. But,—mark this well—the Bread in the tabernacle is living. It has only the name and the aspect of bread. It is not something, It is Some One. It is Jesus in His own Person—*ego sum panis vivus*—He, the Word of the Trinity, Who has passed by way of the Crib and the Cross, to offer Himself and give Himself in Communion, and to beg for the love of man in the Eucharist. And so, if we leave Him aside, if we disdain Him, He knows it, He feels it, He will remember it. That is why the way in which we treat the Eucharistic Bread in this life will have its echo in eternity.

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There is an energy in bread which escapes my eyes, but which passes into me when I eat, which remains in me when I have eaten, which regenerates my blood, and strengthens my mus-

cles—an energy which I incorporate in myself, assimilate to myself, which I make my own, and which supports my life, to such a degree that one identifies bread with life. We say that we "gain our bread" when we mean "gain our life."

Man, that is to say, does not draw his life from within himself. He has received it, and he must sustain it, under pain of seeing it die out, as the fire in the grate dies out without constant attention. He who eats bread, or its equivalent, feeds his life. He who does not eat it, sinks and dies.

The supernatural life, more imperiously than the natural life, demands its food, its bread, because it has its source in ourselves less even than the other; more than the other it is communicated to us. It comes from a higher world, one strange to ours, and is fragile and delicate in proportion. "He who eats of this Bread shall live;.....he who does not eat of It shall have no life in him." (*John* vi, 52-4)

In the ordinary process of eating, it is the food which is transformed; and that is easily intelligible; it is the inferior thing; the living organism, absorbs it to its own profit. But in the sacramental eating the Food is not inferior to him who eats; It dominates him, It is living,

like himself. It is indeed the very principle of life. It is Itself real Life. Now when two elements combine, when two living beings are fused together, it is the stronger and more perfect which draws the other to itself, and imprints upon it its own mark.

Is not this preponderance visible in the intellectual order? When an ignorant person betakes himself to books, to communicate with the thought of another more instructed than himself, and methodically to nourish himself with it, something takes place within him. Little by little he mounts, and approaches to him who is feeding him with his own knowledge. The Master, in instilling his thought, drop by drop, into the mind of his disciple,[1] enlightens him, illuminates him, draws him in his train into the highest spheres of knowledge, elevates him by degrees to his own level, and ends by installing him upon his own plane. There is

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(1) In the measure that the ear perceives the sound of the voice, or the eye the written signs, the understanding perceives the word. A sort of stripping off of the thought is produced. It is disengaged from the material sign, and penetrates into the mind: my thought, which remains mine, becomes yours, and you live upon it. My speech was my incarnate word, sent forth—*missus*—the Messiah of my thought, its manifestation; the written word is the Sacrament of my thought, by the aid of which I succeed in joining my thought to yours, in making you participate, by a real communion, in my intellectual life.

thus created between them a parenthood of mind, whereby one lives by the other, and the other feels himself living again in him, for they live in reality, though under different names, the same intellectual life.

Can we not in this connexion quote those words of St. Paul so full of energy and meaning : "*Vivo autem, jam non ego ; vivit in me Christus :*" (*Gal.*, ii, 20). It is always the man who lives and acts ; neither his nature nor his person is absorbed by Christ ; but he feels himself so strengthened and transformed in Christ, that he no longer distinguishes, under the impression of this investment of his being by the Divinity, what is himself, and what comes from God ; just as one can no longer say, when the iron has communicated with the fire, and is impregnated with it, if it be still iron, or has become fire. The iron has not ceased to be iron, but it has in reality contracted a second nature, having the properties of fire.

I will not insist furthur upon the effects of Communion. That would take us into the heart of the theological domain, whereas I wish to simply coast around it.

Let us seek rather—always by way of analogy —for certain lights upon the *right intention* in Communion.

The Eucharistic Bread does not, any more than does the other bread, create life ; it presupposes it ; it is life itself which is fed by it. The dead do not eat.

The Eucharist is a sacrament of the living. It is made for the living, by the fact of its being a nourishment : *caro mea vere est cibus.*

What, then, are the conditions of normal alimentations, profitable to the living ?

First, since it is absolutely necessary to eat in order to live, and because eating gives strength it might seem that one could not eat too much, and that one would strengthen oneself in proportion to the amount one ate.

Experience makes short work of the illusion : it is not what one eats which profits, but *what one digests.* The eater does not obtain what he wants by turning himself into a passive storehouse for food. If his organs remain idle and inert, if he does not intervene with his own energies, and work upon the food which he has taken, extracting the nutritive elements and appropriating them, then, however much he eat, *he is not nourished ;* and far from feeling himself strengthened, he retains from his meal only discomfort, heaviness and loss of appetite ; whereas in a properly hygienic condition the return of *the appetite,* calling for another meal, is a sign of vigour and health.

With regard to the Eucharist, what is it which responds, in spiritual hygiene, in the economy of our Communions, to this reassuring symptom which we call appetite, but the desire —a certain desire—feeble as you like, perhaps only implicit, so long as it is real—for *an increase of supernatural life*, that is to say, a hunger, more or less conscious, more or less felt, for the Eucharistic Bread, envisaged, not narrowly in the physical fact of eating, eating merely for the sake of eating, but in the right way, in the sense and the spirit of the Institution, looking to the sacramental grace, for its nutritive effects—eating in order to live ? "*Caro mea vere est cibus* ! My flesh is meat indeed."

The Sacrament has no other object but the the nourishing of our supernatural life, by infusing into it more abundantly the graces and the energies of the Redemption, the operation in us of the *work of the Redemption*. For the Eucharist has its origin in the Redemption, and its purpose is to bring it to us.[1]

(1) This connexion between the Eucharist and the Redemption is such that the Sacrament does violence to, if one may so phrase it, the being of Jesus Christ in trying to maintain Him, at least to present Him, in the state of the Victim and in the conditions of the mystic immolation.

That Jesus Christ, since He is living and glorified, in Heaven, Body and Soul, in the unity of His Divine Person, is completely present under the species of bread, and under the speeies of wine, is certain.

It is that which God wishes, it is that which He seeks and waits for. And our religion must necessarily look towards the same end, and regulate itself upon the same plan, in order to adapt itself and be in harmony ; it is this conformity of our will with the Divine Will which establishes and maintains us in the right order.

To have the right intention in prayer, one must ask before all things for what He wishes to give us.

To have the right intention in Communion one must enter into the view of God, respond to the advances and appeals of Jesus our Saviour, and draw, *before all things*, from the Sacrament,

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It is none the less true that the Consecration contemplates the Body and the Blood separately : " This is my Body—This is My Blood ; " that the direct effect of transubstantiation is the conversion of the bread into His Body and the wine into His Blood, and that if the other integral parts of His Being are absoiutely and simultaneously present under the two species, because they are inseparable from the Body and the Blood, they come there, not by the proper force of the Sacrament, but in another way,—the Blood with the Body under the species of bread, the Body with the Blood under the species of wine, by way of natural concomitance ; the divinity, in virtue of the hypostatic union. (*Cf. Trid. Sess.*, xiii, cap. 3).

This separation of the Body and of the Blood is, therefore, only apparent, solely in the words, in the manner of installing the sacramental Presence. It does not exist in fact. But it is enough to bring out the co-ordination between the Eucharist and the Redemption, in order to remind us, according to Our Lord's intention, of the meaning of the institution and of the spirit in which we should use it.

the fruits of the Redemption, in such a way that our desire may be joined to His desire, and that our effort, adding itself to His effort, may bring about that co-operation with Him which cannot come otherwise.

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He is the Redeemer in the Eucharist, as well as on the Cross. It is the same sacrifice, renewed, which delivers Him to us, in the Sacrament as Victim. He only causes Himself to be eaten in order that He may penetrate into us. He does not want to stop at the body. With the same burning and anxious ardour which devoured Him on Calvary *He seeks the soul*, to pursue there His work of Redemption. And if those who communicate do not give themselves to Him, do not correspond, at least in a certain measure, to His desire, if, through frivolity or apathy, they will not let Him go farther than the corporal presence, which remains just as long as the Sacred Species remain, they reverse His design, they offend His love.

Of course, it is not forbidden to a Christian to follow closely worldly affairs, to watch over his material interests, to descend to the necessities and troubles of daily life, to be compassionate, and to have pity. Since the great precept of charity has joined together the love

of God and the love of one's neighbour, he may turn to more human preoccupations, and solicit, from the Father, Who is in Heaven, temporal blessings, for himself and for others; but it must be without forgetting that *temporal graces are not Grace*, and that there will be in them disorders and deviation from the Divine will, and the intention will cease to be right, if these desires of the second order absorb piety or encumber its avenues.

Short-sighted worshippers importune God with these indiscreet prayers, just as children irritate us when they persistently bother us with trivial requests at a time when we are trying to concentrate their attention upon something more urgent, and of an importance which they do not understand.

Supernatural appetite is something different from sensible devotion.

Sensible devotion is only a factitious fervour, a fervour of sentiment, a warming of the sensibility which affects only the heart, a superficial emotion which does not lead to any great things, and serves too often only to mark the lukewarmness of the soul, and while a man complacently indulges the sweet illusion that he is seeking only God, in fact he finds chiefly himself.

The supernatural appetite is *fervour of the*

will, and so is marked by energy and activity.

It may be that the heart feels in this no sensible gratification, and that nature bends itself only with reluctance towards virtues ; this lukewarmness of sentiment—more, if you will, this dryness, this repugnance of the sensibility, only add merit to my fidelity. Prayer is without attraction for me : I pray. Temptation besets and fascinates me : I resist. Duty is a burden to me : I do it. Effort costs : I make it. The way is hard, the march arduous : yet I do not falter. I have weaknesses : I watch over them. I experience even the confusion of lamentable falls ; but I deplore them, I make amends, I turn, with increased humility, in Communion, to Him Who is always ready to pardon the sinner who repents and to lift up the sick man who wishes to be cured.

For the Eucharist, as much as the Redemption, is *for the sinner;* it is a force against sin ; just as the remedy is, for the sick man, a force against the sickness. It is made for him, as the remedy is made for the sick man. He does not abuse it by communicating, provided that he *hates his sin*, as the sick man hates his disease. Falls and renewed falls, which come from imprudence and our sudden backslidings, ought not, therefore, to send one away from Com-

munion, so long as a man's moral being continues to fight against them, so long as his supernatural life reacts and resists.

But if these dispositions are lacking to the sinner, he then passes from the state of victim to the *rôle of accomplice.*

And it is not necessary that his complicity be systematic, or that he compound deliberately with his disorders ; that would be avowed sacrilege. It is enough, to constitute abuse, that there be a suspension of hostility, a tacit agreement of nonchalance and carelessness, an insincere accommodation coupling frequent Communion with evil habits and relapses.

Will this dishonest compromise betray itself by indications ?

When a person eats well, yet does not profit by his eating, it is a bad sign. The *radical sterility* of Communion is a bad note ; for it is not possible to impute it to the Eucharistic Bread, which is essentially living and vivifying. The fault lies with the communicant ; on his shoulders is all the responsibility ; those who communicate badly receive, like the others, the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ—*sumunt boni, sumunt mali, sorte tamen inaequali*—with this difference, that, for those who communicate in a right spirit, it is a gain, but for the others it is a prejudice and a detriment.

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One cannot communicate too often, so long as the intention is right; and the intention is right in so far as it is in correspondence with the Redemption. As soon as the intention ceases to be right, the abuse of the Sacrament begins, and it is proportioned to the deviation.

Communion is the putting of the Eucharist into circulation.

Abstention by a Catholic who believes in the Real Presence—and not to believe in It is not to be a Catholic—is an aberration.

As by a mighty current, the faithful are carried to the Holy Table : *"Take and eat."* Who says that ? It is the Church, by the voice of the Pope. But, before the Church, before the Pope, it is Jesus Christ Himself.

The Church only insists, and the Pope only presses, as an echo to the burning appeals of the Heart of Jesus.

But the desire which we have for Communion, and the insistence of the invitation, do not authorize any one to treat the Sacrament more lightly. In the Twentieth Century, as in the time of St. Paul, *"probet seipsum homo* ! Let each one prove himself before Communion."[1]

(1) *Probet autem seipsum homo et sic de pane illo edat et de calice bibat.* (1 *Cor.*, xi, 28).

"Exhort the people to communicate frequently, but taking care at the same time to remind them how dangerous and pernicious it is to do it unworthily.

"In our time, when faith is tottering and charity languishes, this precaution is *particularly necessary*, in order that frequent communion may not diminish the respect due to so great a mystery."(1)

Who is the out-of-date Jansenist who talks thus? It is Pius x in the Encyclical *Editae seape Dei*, of the 26th of May, 1910.

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From the Trinity to the Eucharist, through the Redemption. This is the *downward path* which Love has opened to the Incarnate Word, that He may have contact with our poor nature, and renew, in the hidden and austere union of the Sacrament, the bonds of supernatural adoption which have been broken by sin.

From the Eucharist to the Trinity, still through the Redemption. This is the *upward*

(1) *Populus, quum ad frequentem Sanctissimi sumendi usum excitetur, tum etiam commonefiat quam periculosum exitiosumque sit ad sacram divini illius cibi mensam indigne accedere.*

Quam quidem diligentiam postulare videntur maxime haec tempora nutantis fidei et languescentis caritatis, ne forte, ex frequentiore usu, debita tanto mysterio reverentia minuatur: sed potius in hoc ipso sit causa cur "probet seipsum homo et sic de pane illo edat et de calice bibat." (Cf. *Encyc. Editae saepe Dei*, 26 May, 1910).

path which invites the love of man to return " to Him who calls him with a great cry of His Heart " to Heaven where His divine life, begun in this world by grace, and nourished by Communion, shall flower in the splendours of the beatific union.

The whole scheme of religion may be summed up in two things—the advances of God, and the response of man.

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LANDRIEUX, MAURICE
AUTHOR

From the Trinity to the Eucharis
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